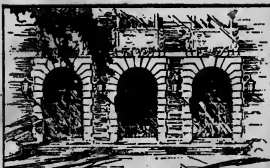


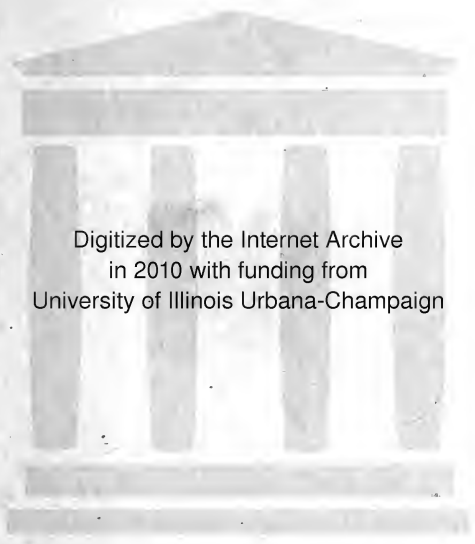
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[West, Jane]

THE
INFIDEL FATHER;

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"A TALE OF THE TIMES," "A GOSSIP'S STORY," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

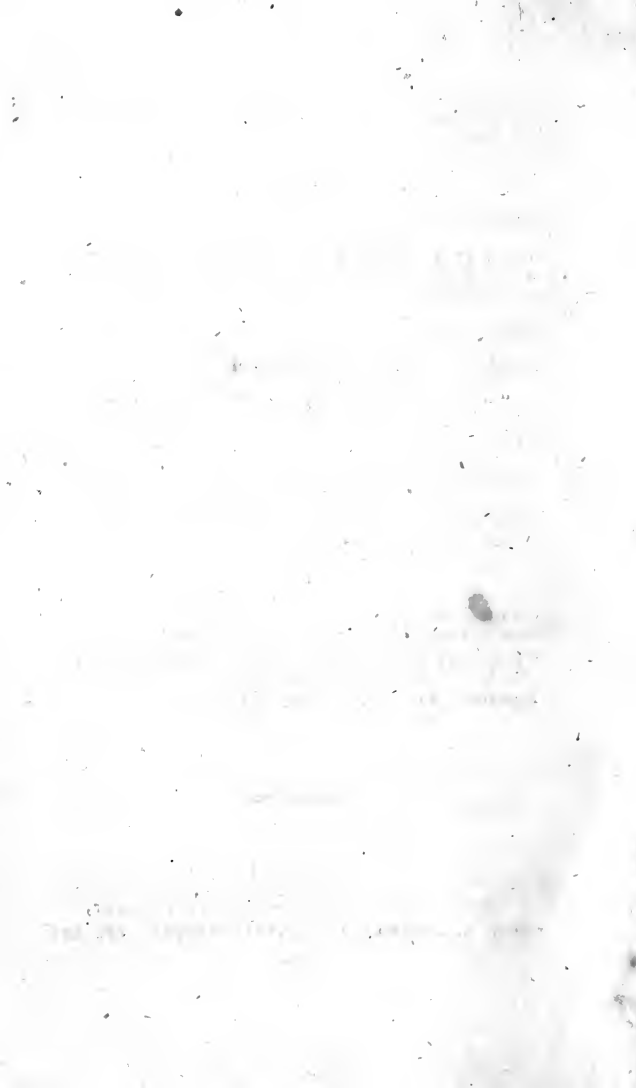
Oh the dark days of vanity ! when here
How tasteless, and how terrible when gone !
Gone ? they ne'er go ; when past, they haunt us still ;
The spirit walks of every day deceas'd,
And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.

YOUNG.



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1802.



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THE

INTRODUCTION.

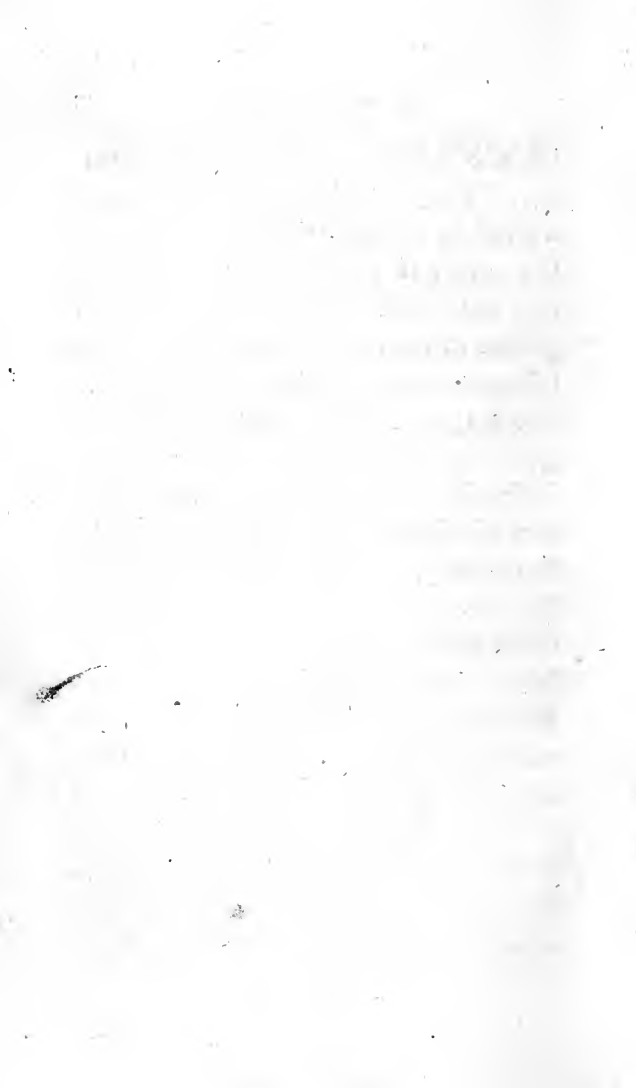
BEFORE I address my readers with the quaint familiarity of a fictitious character, let me, in my own person, gratefully acknowledge the candid treatment that my former works have received from the public. On this head I could be diffuse; but I will only *briefly observe* that, though their approbation may have been bestowed on more deserving candidates, none ever were more truly solicitous to earn the meed of *honest praise*.

Fearful of forfeiting the good opinion of my patrons, it is with real anxiety that I again appear, at what I feel to be an awful tribunal. *All* my reasons for thus frequently troubling the world with my

reflections need not be divulged ; but one motive, though it favours of egotism, I will not conceal. The rage for novels does not decrease ; and, though I by no means think them the best vehicles for “ the words of sound doctrine ; ” yet, while the enemies of our church and state continue to pour their poison into unwary ears through this channel, it behoves the friends of our establishments to convey an antidote by the same course ; especially as those who are most likely to be infected by false principles, will not search for a refutation of them in profound and scientific compositions.

The particular design of the present work is, to shew the superiority which religious principle possesses, when compared with a sense of honour, moral fitness, or a love of general applause. The story is confessedly subordinate to this aim ; and those who dislike it will observe, that the *argumentative* part is
not

not affected by the faults of the *narrative*. The episodical characters have a use besides relieving the sombrous hue of the principal personages. I wish they may be considered as an *overcharged* picture of the vanity, extravagance, and self-importance, that have for some years infected the middle classes of society, threatening destruction to the sound sense, decent propriety, and manly virtues of this most *important* portion of the community.



THE
INFIDEL FATHER.

CHAP. I.

A few words from Mrs. Prudentia relating to her own private history; with Anecdotes of her maid Betty.

THOUGH fashion has substituted ease and non-chalance for assiduity and ceremony, yet an admirer of old customs must be expected to adhere to the principles which she wishes to recommend. Much mutual civility must pass between me and my dear readers, on my again meeting them in my character of the narrative Mrs. Prudentia Homespun. I sincerely hope that *they* enjoy good health, and I am particularly anxious to hear a favourable account of their eyes. It would grieve me to the heart

to be informed, that they were afflicted with vertigo, languor, or any nervous disorder, which had induced their physicians to proscribe even my *innocent* prattle. I also hope, that, though they have escaped the pressure of any severe calamity, they have not felt quite happy since they perused my *last* lucubrations, owing to their anxiety at my long silence. Perhaps this last expectation borders on the romantic; let me then modify the phrase, and express the humbler wish, that their palates may not have been so palled by the high-seasoned French and German cookery that has lately been placed before them, as to prevent them from relishing a little old English fare, dressed in a plain style, and, if not more *piquant*, at least more *wholesome*, than those outlandish farragoes.

Conceiving that my readers are equally solicitous to hear of my welfare, I assure them, that, though I certainly
grow

grow older every year, I do not yet feel any symptom of the apathy and inactivity of old age. I am as anxious to obtain their plaudits *now*, as when I sent my first literary bantling into the world; and I shall be as much concerned to hear it whispered, that "poor Mrs. Prudentia really has written herself *out*," as if my former efforts to please had fallen dead from the press.

I will however acknowledge, that there may be some incidental causes which may render this work less agreeable than my preceding gossipings. My plan has ever been to seize on some important moral truth, and then to fabricate a story to *illustrate* it. While I ruminated on the enormities of the age, and considered where I could best apply my sovereign specific, of course the most prevalent maladies would first strike my observation. I considered a dereliction of parental authority, extravagant
B 4 expecta-

expectations, romantic attachments, and the dangers arising from confidential intimacies, especially with people of *doubtful* principles, as most prominent among the many morbid diseases that haunt the lazar-house of relaxed manners. *First* impressions are generally most forcible; the friends of our youth are most dear; the scenes of our early pleasures are supposed to be most beautiful. According to this rule, I never shall be so much attached to my present heroine as I was to my past favourites; and I am convinced, that an idea faintly conceived will be feebly expressed. Though *self-love* may conceal from me my own deficiency, it must strike the bystander.

But, supposing this work to fail of success, may not some little alteration take place in my readers as well as in myself? In this age every body is a critic; and to peruse a work without giving

giving a decided opinion upon its merits, would argue a total want of sagacity. It is no matter how the book was read, whether when half asleep, or sitting round the breakfast table. No matter how large the circle, or how many good things you heard and said during the perusal. You may skip as many pages as you choose, find out *hidden* meanings, and overlook what are *obvious*. Adroit readers know every thing by intuition; and their only study is, to say something *sententious* when they lay down the performance. Now if it happen to be a first production, or if none of his former lucubrations have attained celebrity, the most liberal expressions will be "charming!" "admirable!" "I protest, it is quite a first-rate work." But, on the other hand, if the author really shall have made some progress up the steep heights of Parnassus, the best way of exalting your

own reputation for sagacity will be, to roll him down, which may be easily effected by the trite phrase of "*quite a falling-off.*" The most stupendous genius can hardly withstand such an observation, if repeated in half a dozen polite circles; for, though these censures may not exceed one hundred, of whom not more than twenty may happen to have read ten pages of the book, "the world," as it is termed, will have formed its opinion, and the safest way for the luckless author is to make a *speedy* and *decent* retreat to the vale of obscurity.

Beside these dangers from "the world," the *scriblerii* of the present day have another host of enemies, whom it requires no common degree of temerity to brave. These are the whole tribe of Reviewers, whose sagacity and impartiality none can dispute, whose veracious assertions no one can question, and
from

from whose authoritative tribunal there is no appeal. If this corps continued "one and undivided," I will allow that one must be a very Drawcanfir to venture to oppose them; but, as their *number* multiplies, I confess, I think they seem in the usual situation of wide extended kingdoms, which are in reality weakened by an apparent increase of strength? 'Tis true, the magisterial tone of expression is preserved; and "we affirm," "we aver," and "we decide," are as frequent in their pages as when their decretals, like papal bulls, thundered through the land without opposition; and, for my own part, I still retain so many of my *juvenile* habits, that whenever *one* review assails me, I always feel something very like an ague fit; and even when it proceeds so far as to call me a troublesome old chatterbox, I dare not for my life attempt a reply. In this mortified state I generally remain,

till some kind neighbour lends me his *rival review*, in which things wear so different an aspect, that my courage returns, I hold up my head, take a pinch of snuff, and repeat with somewhat of a triumphant tone the old adage,

“ Empire’s nothing when divided.”

I have introduced the above paragraph to convince those who were acquainted with my *former* works, of my *identity*. They know that, beside claiming an unbounded privilege of digressing, I must be allowed to say odd things, to talk of myself whenever I please, and to support my own opinion, though without the least shadow of vanity, egotism, or pertinacity, which are qualities I *utterly abominate*; and am *totally free from*. If I occasionally introduce myself, or my Danbury friends, into my narrative, it is either from a wish to gratify the curiosity of the public, by giving them a
little

little peep behind the curtain, or to illustrate some important truth by a familiar incident, a method which people of *superior genius* often have recourse to.

For instance, I am assured the public will rejoice to hear that the application of some fleecy hosiery has relieved me from the rheumatic pain in my shoulder, which I caught by endeavouring to turn Greek last summer, when I sported a black cloak of my own knitting. The history of the cloak itself is singular. I began it when labouring under a strong temptation to write satires and critiques, and found it so happy a method of calming an over-busy temper, that I seriously recommend a similar attempt to all my sisters of the quill whenever they find themselves tormented by an exuberance of spleen, or haunted by the restless fiend ambition. Many serious mischiefs have originated from ill-directed activity; and I am persuaded it would be more expedient

expedient to mar a few yards of canvass, like our industrious grandmothers, than to dabble in the abstruse sciences, to indulge in the wild reveries of fiction, or to sport with the fair fame of others, according to the present method of exercising female ingenuity. It will be set down as one of my whims I know, yet I cannot help adding, that I think the needle a *safer* implement than the pen.

To go on with my family affairs. My cat occupies the same corner of my fire-side which she did many years ago, and Betty and I continue very well satisfied with each other. 'Tis true, her long waist, square handkerchief, and clear muslin apron, look very Gothic among the genteel dresses, long trains, and nodding plumes of the better sort of Danbury Abigails, who I know have affirmed that she is *desolate* of common sense. I have, however, an high opinion of her understanding; for she is constantly of my

my way of thinking ; and whenever I declaim against the times, she pronounces them. “ *worse and worse.*”

Since I had last the honour of addressing my readers, the fameness of the Danbury parties has been relieved by a visit from Lady FitzJohn, who, accompanied by her only daughter, Miss Melisandriana, passed great part of a summer with her cousin Mrs. Inkle. Mr. Artremidorus FitzJohn was also expected to spend a few days with us ; but, unluckily, that gentleman drove up in his curricule at the very instant when Mr. Inkle was tying up a brown paper parcel, and making his final bow to a market customer ; which so shocked Mr. FitzJohn’s feelings, that he determined to *cut* the visit, as it would be impossible for him to breathe the same atmosphere with a retailer of tape, as stiff and precise as his own buckram. He could only devour Mrs. Inkle’s
early

early strawberries, (which, with a judicious smack, he determined to be hardly eatable,) before he recollected an engagement that he had made with his friend Sir Bronze Harpy, to meet him at Brighton; a circumstance which had entirely slipped his memory till that instant. In vain did Mrs. Inkle observe, that all the Danbury young ladies counted of dancing with him at the assembly; in vain did the fair Melisandria intreat him, in a loud whisper, not to leave her in such a *detestable* place; maugre the frown which gradually overcast the luminous rotund of Lady FitzJohn's countenance, Mr. Artremidorus was inexorable. His horses were ordered to be put to, and the only proof he gave of being guilty of the weakness of domestic complaisance, was a promise to remember his sister's message to Sir Bronze. My regard to female delicacy would have induced me
to

to suppress it ; but as the Lady hallooed it from the top of the stairs, it was evidently not meant to be a secret. “ Tell “ Harpy,” said she, “ that I think him a “ *divine* fellow, and that I am *dying* to “ see him at FitzJohn Place.”

I had been well acquainted with Lady FitzJohn when she was only Kitty Muggleton, and Mrs. Inkle obligingly invited me to meet my old friend. Her Ladyship received me with the most affable condescension, and I had the honour to cut into the half-crown whist table. These distinctions so elated me, that I foolishly repeated several anecdotes of our childish years, which proved her Ladyship to be about my own age, and not *always* to have been my superior. The important scenes in which she had since figured, obliterated all traces of those events, and I had cause to lament my own tenacious memory, since at my *future* visits I could never obtain more than

than a “ how d’ye,” accompanied by a very low curtesy ; and, after many useless efforts to rejoin the patricians, I was forced to content myself with the second-rate praise of being good-natured to young people, by joining the commerce table, which was formed for Miss Melifandriania’s amusement whenever that young Lady did not choose to edify us rustics by singing, playing, reciting verses, or placing herself in interesting languid attitudes.

Sometimes, to diversify the scene, Mrs. Inkle’s route was changed to a *conversazione*. I am not used to these latter entertainments, and can only describe the one at which myself and all the Danbury Ladies officiated in the humble capacity of hearers. The amusement consisted in inquiries made by Mrs. Inkle, and answers given by the Fitz-Johns, somewhat in the style of the chorus in the Greek dramas ; for by
this

this means we, the auditors, were fully informed of every thing relating to the taste, grandeur, munificence, splendid connexions, and astonishing merit of the FitzJohns. These tidings produced an effect upon the company almost similar to an electrical shock. We all recollected instances of our own negligence with horror; and when we were assured that Lord Glanville honoured Sir Peter with the strictest intimacy, and that Lady Caroline was never easy when absent from her sweet friend Melisandriana, our own ignorance of etiquette and inattention to people of such fashion covered us with confusion, especially when Mr. Inkle, who assisted the shop-boy in handing round the syllabubs, whispered me, that it was all true; her Ladyship having just ordered three hundred yards of pink callico to furnish her attics, which she thought would be good enough for sleeping rooms for
humble

humble cousins, Liverpool merchants, geniuses, dancing masters, and other odd people, whom nobody cared about.

I can hardly describe the agreeable agitation which the appearance of the FitzJohns caused at Danbury. To be sure, we were a little severe upon the poor Inkles, sometimes blaming their extravagance for keeping such high company, and sometimes wondering why *they*, of all people in the world, should be so lucky as to have such great relations. We foreboded that next year they too would certainly commence gentlefolks, retire upon their fortunes, set up their buggy, and leave the shop to Jack Dapper, their apprentice. Nay, we saw convincing proofs of the justness of our predictions, in the consequential tie of Jack's cravat, and the important curl of his brutus. Thus we prophesied, but like Cassandra prophesied in vain, or rather with less perfect insight into futurity

turity than the famed Trojan fair. Deceived by the glare of tinsel, we mistook it for genuine gold, and thus formed our auguries from false prognostics. In the next chapter I shall introduce the reader to a more intimate acquaintance with Lady FitzJohn, who will make a distinguished figure in these pages, being, like Falstaff, not “only witty herself, “but the cause of wit in others.”

CHAP. II.

*A woman of superior genius is introduced.
Her husband gains the acmé of connubial felicity by losing all responsibility.*

THE maiden name of Lady FitzJohn, I have already observed, was Muggleton. Her father was an honest industrious farmer ; whose frugal habits enabling him to reserve fifty pounds a year, he sagaciously determined that his only child, the heiress of such immense wealth, should possess the blessing of a *good* education. His wife, to whom he communicated his scheme, seconded it with all the eloquence that she possessed, and quoted the motto which her school-master had written in her common prayer-book, that “ Learning was
I I “ better

“better than house and land.” Because, as the adage observes,

“When house and land are gone and spent,
“Then learning is most excellent.”

“Therefore, husband,” continued the good dame, “we will turn off Sue, “and I’ll do all the work myself, and “moil and toil early and late; only let “Kitty have a *good education*.”

The design was excellent, but the means to accomplish it were ill chosen. Deceived by a specious advertisement of the Miss MacFriskys, in which they promised to take the most exemplary care of the *morals* of all the young ladies who were entrusted to them, in an evil hour Kitty Muggleton was removed from her father’s rustic dwelling, and exchanged her homespun dust-gown for a hanging sleeve coat, and laced peak, her domestic employments for learning bad French, executing miserable drawings,

ings, and squalling out of all time and tune, under the direction of the Miss MacFriskys; and this with the view of receiving a good education.

Beside these ostensible accomplishments, many others were taught at *the above* academy. The governesses were the prettiest women in the parish, and of course attracted the greatest number of beaux. As there was an indecorum in permitting children to witness all the flirtation scenes which were consequent to the above circumstance, the pupils were dismissed to the school-room, to learn their tasks; where all who did not listen at the parlour door indulged in that freedom which results from the absence of all restraint. Folly and vice are contagious; and the evil qualities of vanity, envy, and prejudice, soon spread through the seminary. But, what is still more to be lamented, cunning was made to predominate, even in the most

artless and enchanting period of human existence. A spirit of intrigue is speedily diffused; and if one honest girl objected to a project for deceiving the governesses, her scruples were silenced by asking her, if she forgot that Miss Nelly MacFrisky told her elder sister that she was gone to market, when the whole school knew she had been walking in the grove with Captain Splatterdash.

Miss Muggleton spent seven years in this seminary, in which time she worked a map of England, embroidered a fire-screen, finished a piece which some called the head of Mr. Serjeant Glyn, and others mistook for an owl, almost construed one of Fontaine's fables, learned to sing half an Italian song, painted one side of a tiffany petticoat, and nearly finished a fillagree tea-caddy. Beside these attainments, she had imbibed a sovereign contempt for her father

and mother, an abhorrence of rural scenes, a disrelish for simple pleasures, a taste for expence, a habit of deceit, and an opinion that Miss Muggleton was the first person in the world.

The next seven years of the young lady's life were spent in chagrin and ennui. Though her merit and beauty were indisputable, no Sir John Languish nor Lord Tremor had yet sought out her sylvan retreat to make her the tender of his hand and fortune. And yet the novels which she had studied at Miss MacFrisky's convinced her that such events were not only *possible*, but *probable*. As the fault could not lie either in herself or the unknown gentleman, it must be in her father and mother; who, to say the truth, were such *glumpish* awkward beings, as no man of fashion would choose to be allied to. 'Tis true, in compliance with her earnest solicitations,

tions, Master Muggleton had modernized so far as to have a chitterlin tacked into his *holland* shirt, and to diminish the cuff of his Sunday coat; and his wife, though with infinite reluctance, permitted her new chintz pattern gown to train upon the ground two inches; but the good housewife was so shocked at this extravagance, that the moment she thought no one observed her, she carefully pinned it up, and, maugre her daughter's objections to such gross vulgarity, she would boast that this dexterous management kept it one whole summer out of the wash-tub. In short, Mr. and Mrs. Muggleton were boors in grain, and there was no such thing as improving them. Consequently neither his Lordship nor Sir John arrived.

After waiting for them, as I before observed, seven long years, Miss Muggleton turned her eyes toward less brilliant
C 2 objects;

objects ; and after successively *peeping* at recruiting officers, Dr. Dilletanti our smart physician, and even at Mr. Medium himself, then newly placed in his pastoral office, she declared that Danbury was nothing better than a burying place for the living, and that she would be immured in such a sepulchral vault no longer. Her father and mother, all astonishment, that Kitty should not be happy, when she had had such a good education, and led as easy a life as any gentlewoman would wish to do, readily granted her intreaty to pay a visit to a relation who lived in a large manufacturing town ; and about three months after, we were greeted with the surprising tidings, that Kitty Muggleton was actually become Mrs. Jones.

As curiosity must be excited to know the history of the happy man thus *blessed* with an help-mate, I must inform the
reader

reader, that Mr. Peter Jones was by trade a wholesale ironmonger, and in the estimation of all his neighbours, *a very warm man*. Having passed through life to his five-and-fortieth year in the solitary state of singleness, he began to consider, that as he had now got every thing very comfortable about him, he might as well make himself *quite happy*, by choosing an agreeable companion. Beauty he did not care for, fortune he did not want, wit he judged would be rather inconvenient; but a sweet, gentle, complying temper was indispensable. For though Mr. Jones knew that marriage was a change of condition, he by no means understood that bondage must supply the place of freedom. On the contrary, he was a staunch assertor of prerogative; and, notwithstanding that the theoretical government of bachelors' wives is used for a proverb, Mr.

Jones had laid down such infallible rules for the management of his wife, as must even subdue a Xantippe. But, not wholly depending on their success, he also resolved to be wary in his choice; and fixed upon Miss Muggleton, because she was the most good-humoured compliant creature that he ever saw.

I am not an entire convert to the utility of the doctrine of conjugal non-resistance; and, though “unreproving” is in the estimation of the *superior* sex, the best epithet that can be bestowed on a wife, I think there are terms which would better describe her complicated duties. I am not going to substitute *scolding*, or even *grumbling*; for I should not only be unwilling to have my works burnt by every *master* of a family into whose hands they may happen to fall, but because I think that female influence is better promoted by the propriety
and

and gentleness, than by the volubility or asperity of our remarks. But I wish, from the most patriotic motives, to ask those husbands who have been through life the tremendous bashaws of their own fire-sides, if they really are become happier by never having been contradicted (or, as I should rather term it, *induced to alter their opinions*) by their wedded partners? Have their colloquial comforts increased, in proportion as terror silenced every dissenting opinion? When their chair was exactly fixed to their own mind, the fire put out or increased according to their commands, and candles forbidden when the family begged they might be lighted, when their own accommodation was exclusively studied, and every one else obliged to sacrifice their comforts, and to sink into profound silence and trembling awe—have these lords paramount felt

very happy? I have known instances of people who had their own way till they became absolutely miserable, and recovered their peace of mind by submitting to the direction of others.

Will the reader indulge me in a grave remark?—Providence intended us to be social beings. We have humours and propensities which nothing but collision with the humours and propensities of others can rub off. If a person lives secluded from the world, and in the constant practice of self-indulgence, he not only acquires many unpleasant singularities, but also generally turns a self-tormentor. Good-sense is no preservative against the former; even genuine piety often proves insufficient: and as to genius, it mostly increases the evil; for the proud confidence which it feels in its own powers generally makes it culpably penurious in its respect to the judgment

ment of others. I have rarely met with a person of superior abilities, without wishing that I durst point out some disagreeable peculiarity contracted through inattention. With respect to the moroseness which so generally attends the study of self-gratification, it is easily accounted for by the same principle which makes petted children peevish. I doubt not but my readers are now convinced, that from my laudable desire to make Mr. Jones amiable and happy, I shall admit his lady to at least an occasional exercise of the sovereign power. But I must make one more deprecatory remark before I proceed in my narrative, by declaring that the foregoing observations are not designed to extend to those gentlemen who are *too good* to want a monitor, and *too wise* ever to fall into error. But as their number cannot be very great, and probably does not much

exceed the few of my own sex whose minds are too gentle to frame a reproof; I leave them as proper partners, excellently adapted to each other, and I solemnly pronounce, that only *such* a man can deserve *such* a woman.

N. B. As I am a very great admirer of all the extraordinary productions of nature, I shall be much obliged to any one who will certify the *actual existence* of either of the above *rare* varieties in the human species.

To return from this long, and, from one of my sisterhood, unsuitable digression, though I think an occasional and discreet remonstrance allowable to my own sex, and very salutary and wholesome to the other, yet I by no means approve of young ladies throwing out the lure of over-abundant gentleness, to attract lovers who cannot be captivated by any other quality. Deceit is a most dreadful

dreadful foundation on which to build a permanent connexion, and I neither approve of a painted face, nor a varnished mind. Miss Muggleton, as I have before said, had been taught to substitute art for virtue. While her aim was to get a good establishment, she confined the exercise of this faculty to the likeliest means of facilitating her grand design. She had steered through all the changes of languishing, indignant, sprightly, and affable beauty, without making one capture. At last she bethought herself of hoisting out the *placid* colours, and Peter Jones struck his flag immediately.

Every observation which the enamoured swain made on his mistress during courtship, confirmed his admiration of her meekness and his own wonderful penetration. He spoke about money

affairs; she begged him to believe that she was not a mercenary creature, whose heart could be purchased by sordid gold. Happiness was all her wish; she was convinced Mr. Jones had such true generosity, that he would choose his wife to appear like other people; and she was persuaded too that he would not wish to have the tender interchange of well-constituted souls *often* interrupted by demands for money. But in all these things his opinions would be hers. As to a future provision, if she should be so unfortunate as to survive him—but that was impossible.—Jones felt the tear which trickled down the charmer's cheek at that instant melt his “very heart of heart;” and the next day, after presenting her with a settlement of five thousand pounds, and a deed for one hundred a-year pin money, he expressed

pressed his impatience to taste the sweets of domestic happiness, and begged for an early day.

I verily believe the “sweets of domestic happiness” to be somewhat of the same species of fruit with the apples of Tantalus; for I have observed, that those who are most impatient to obtain them rarely find their longings gratified. The honey-moon had scarcely waned before Jones had reason to *doubt* his own penetration. Storms obscured the lustre of the bride’s countenance; he saw with astonishment that she could frown, and he heard with terror the endearing phrase of “Just as it is agreeable to you, sir,” changed into “indeed, my dear, it *must* be so.” Determined to maintain his just rights, Jones remonstrated, talked of gratitude, artifice, and used a few other *ill-sounding* words. But, horror on horror! he now discovered that the lady was a wit, skilled in argument,

ment, well read in books, and particularly happy in pointing a retort. What in this case could the poor husband do ; out-talked in every argument, and even left little hope of success if he had recourse to more violent measures ! for his diminutive size and slender frame could not make any powerful use of the *stick*, which it is asserted (I know not how justly) the law of the land permits the husband to resort to in cases of *great* emergency ; and the cause of the *weaker* sex was in this instance defended by a fair Amazon, whose figure, voice, and look, when she armed for combat, announced the conscious Thalestris.

The *little* body of Mr. Jones contained however a *mighty* soul ; and if he had belonged to a club, I do believe he would have come off victorious : but as, unhappily, he never thought of that grand ally for refractory husbands, he could only apply to a solitary bottle, which he found.

found of little use ; for in the same proportion as it raised his spirits to the point of magnanimity, it deprived his tongue of the power of utterance ; and a very *valiant* man who can neither stand nor speak, may as well be a *coward*. But what was still worse, the next morning, during the period of nausea and headache, his faithful consort constantly attended, and plied him with water-gruel and mortification in equal quantities. Harassed by contests in which the enemy gained fresh strength, Mr. Jones at length sounded a parley. The fair victor resolved only to accede to such terms as should cut off the *possibility* of all future resistance, and determined not to be contented with the conditions that all prudent girls expect when they marry old bachelors. Beside getting rid of all the old servants, old furniture, and old customs, she required him to make a total surrender of himself, his family, and

and fortune. She reminded him of the *honour* done him by a person of her taste and judgment, and she thundered in his ears the *modern* discovery, that the sceptre of government belongs to whichever sex possesses *superior* understanding. I am not speaking of that symbol which is adorned by the dove and olive branch, since that sometimes *slides* unobserved into the hand of real gentleness, but of the insignia of real absolute *undisguised* dominion.

“Nature, my life,” said this *endearing* creature, “has not given you that dignity and discernment which will entitle you to take the lead. I consider your comfort, love, when I assure you, that you will only puzzle your poor head by thinking about what you never can comprehend. You must let me do as I please, and depend upon it I’ll make you a man of consequence.” A remonstrance of this kind, delivered with a
fwing

swing of the right arm, was certainly unanswerable, and Mrs. Jones became “King, Glamis, Cawdor, all!”

I will not minutely describe the revolution which followed in Mr. Jones’s appearance, manners, house, and family; nor will I enlarge upon the *comforts* which his lady’s superintendence bestowed upon him. As he must know what they were, I dare say he properly appreciated their value. I shall confine myself to one improvement, in which her genius shone forth with full brilliancy. Among the many disagreeable changes incident to this lady’s change of situation, her new name seemed most intolerable. It is true, Muggleton had nothing very musical, or very sonorous in its cadence; but it was distinguished by three syllables, and with some pretty appellative, such as Catherina, before it, it did not look unrespectable at the bottom of a letter. But a vile plebeian

mono-

monosyllable, the constant associate of Newgate calendars and ridiculous stories, plain Jones, and nothing but Jones, was insufferable. She really wondered how she could in a *weak* moment consent to be called by this degrading term.

In the midst of her despair, my quondam friend recollected many happy instances of successful geniuses, who had pruned or amplified their family names, till the most barbarous and vulgar acquired a genteel orthography. Nothing short of superlative skill could make any thing of such an unpromising composition as Jones; but what will not taste and industry atchieve? She resolved to visit the humble village in which her husband first saw the light, and where his family had long resided in contented obscurity, unagitated by the anxieties which destroyed the repose of their more opulent but less happy descendant. The register, the parish writings, were
searched

searched in vain. It was Jones handed down from father to son. Jones churchwarden was painted in yellow ochre on the church wall, and no various readings occurred. Nay, as if Fortune was in her worst mood, Dame Jones's receipt for a plumb-pudding, and Madam Margery Jones's eye-water, were preserved by oral tradition, and perpetuated the remembrance of the name and family.

But in an obscure corner of the church-yard, a mutilated grave-stone revived my heroine's hopes. It was erected to the memory of John Joan, husband of Fraz Joan of that parish; and, though it only proved the incorrectness of the engraver, the lady's vivid imagination instantly suggested that this abbreviation of Frances must mean Fitz. The clerk, who was also sexton, and schoolmaster to the parish, convinced by *weighty* arguments, confirmed the discovery;

covery ; and as the words might be misplaced, or an *a* substituted for an *b*, it was plain that Jones was a corruption of Fitz-John.

To confirm this suggestion, my friend next visited the dwelling of her husband's ancestors, and found indisputable marks that it had been a baronial residence 400 years ago. She magnified a ditch into a moat, transformed a pigeon-house into a watch-tower, and immortalized the depredations of the rats by ascribing their injuries to the assaults of battering cannon, when the castle was besieged during the baron's wars. A circumstance which had just occurred enabled her to embellish her tale with an episode, which always accompanies the description of a castle, I mean a ghost. A belief that the old hall was haunted was very general ; and, though it originated in the waggery of some idle boys, who had exhibited a candle in the
skeleton

skeleton of a horse's head of an evening, this inventive genius brought out a renowned Sir Walter, armed cap-a-pee, who stalked nightly round the ancient bounds of his demesne, carrying in his hand the head of Ragodium Logdum, a furious Scandinavian chief whom he had killed in single combat. The circumstances of this rencontre, she observed, were preserved in the village; the ghost, she owned, with a smile, was, she believed, the addition of well-meaning superstition, grateful to the memory of a deceased benefactor, and not likely to impose on an enlightened understanding. She, however, took care to alter and adjust its drapery every time that she told the tale, till at last Sir Walter made as terrific an appearance as any phantom whom the magic skill of my fair cotemporaries has called from its peaceful grave within these last twenty years.

Soon after Mrs. Fitz-John returned from this excursion, her husband was elevated to the civic chair in the ancient and honourable borough of W—— and, as if it were determined that grandeur should precipitately reach its zenith, Mr. Mayor was changed into Sir Peter, in consequence of his carrying up an address to court. Nothing now was wanting to crown the cup of connubial bliss but an heir, nor was that blessing long implored in vain. Yet the birth of Mr. Artremidorus proved a fresh source of humiliation to papa; for when Sir Peter with all a parent's joy clasped the little fellow in his arms, and calling him a young ironmonger, protested he would soon *learn* him the way into the ware-house, the delicate nerves of his mother were so much affected that she fell into hysterics, nor could she recover till Sir Peter promised that he should be brought up *quite* a gentleman.

The following year produced a daughter, and the chief difficulty attending the young lady's appearance was to find out a proper name for her. Nothing less than three syllables could be endured. Cecilia and Geraldina were alternately thought of; but a chimney-sweeper calling his two daughters by those poetical titles in Lady Fitz-John's hearing, she determined to exercise her invention in the fabrication of a name that would bid defiance to plebeian articulation, and produced Melisandriania to the great dismay of Sir Peter, who regretted that his children's long names made it impossible for him to be fond of them.

It has been long agreed, that the pleasures of anticipation exceed those of possession. Lady Fitz-John afforded an additional instance of the truth of this observation. Her house was new furnished, her empire was undisputed, and her

consequence as the first person in W—— was too firmly established to fear the insidious attacks of a rival. Yet the display of taste, the exercise of power, and the assumption of consequence, were not specifics against discontent. Even the musical sound of “your ladyship” ceased to charm when it became familiar; and some other method of acquiring distinction must be resorted to, or the world would think her gone to sleep. Fashion now opened a new avenue to fame; education became the whim of the day, and Lady Fitz-John resolved to “out-Herod Herod” in the care of her children.

No sooner was she relieved from her last confinement, than she devoted her whole time to the perusal of systems of education, and to the conversation of literati. Even in this age of enlightened intellect, the number of these luminaries is not so great as to permit a constellation
to

to be visible in *every part* of the horizon, and the dull meridian of W—— could only boast one solitary star; but then its splendor announced it to be an orb of the first magnitude. Every body at W——, that is to say all Lady Fitz-John's world, pronounced Mr. Babble to be a man of most astonishing understanding; their reasons for thinking so proceeded from his wearing a large broad-brimmed hat, a pair of green spectacles, long flowing hair without powder, and from his constantly contradicting every body.

To this genius Lady Fitz-John determined to entrust "the hope and expectation" of her illustrious house; and, having been told that education should commence with our existence, and that insurmountable prejudices are formed, and tempers incurably warped, by circumstances and associations *antecedent* to the child's running alone, she resolved

to prevent the bad effects which must result from the systems of ignorant superstitious nurses, by immediately fixing upon a domestic tutor. She accordingly entered into treaty with Mr. Babble, who from pure philanthropy consented to relinquish two schemes that he was then prosecuting; to render the winds tractable and stationary; and to compound a chymical tincture which should so operate upon the viscera, as to annihilate anger and envy, falsely supposed *mental* qualities, but proved by Mr. Babble to be mere *angular* and *spheroidical* particles. I say, Mr. Babble generously abandoned these liberal studies to write the desired ideas on the blank minds of the young Fitz-Johns. For this eminent professor of the science of education had brought his art to such perfection, that he only desired the parent to let him know what character he was to form, and he promised that his
pupil

pupil should exhibit it as exactly as blancmange does the shape of the mould in which it cools.

Lady Fitz-John's desires were chiefly limited to exterior advantages. She wished her son to be very tall, very thin, and with such an air of high fashion, that wherever he went people might say, "There goes a gentleman." Sir Peter begged that a little attention to the *main chance* might be thrown in, but both his lady and Mr. Babble scouted the illiberal suggestion.

The daughter, of course, was to be very beautiful and highly accomplished. I forget whether either of the children were to have any real, intellectual, or moral qualities; but they were to possess that happy *versatility* and *enviable* ductility of character, which would enable them to adopt the reigning fashion both in mien and manners. Her ladyship added with a sigh, that she would

have also requested Mr. Babble to give her girl wit, had she not found by experience that a superiority of genius is incompatible with happiness, especially when it is unequally yoked to the obtuse pericranium of imbecile inanity. How far her wishes were fulfilled time will discover.

CHAP. III.

Necessary to be read by all Mothers, as it contains a Synopsis of Education on a liberal Plan.

MODERN philanthropy has been excellently described under the figure of an allegorical personage, who is so busily employed in searching for distant objects of distress, that she stumbles over a pilgrim that came to solicit immediate assistance. Most of the virtues of the same school are subject to similar distortions of intellect; they are either engrossed by *remote* contingencies when they should be acting upon *present* circumstances, or they are balancing be-

tween two *supposed* duties when one *real* one requires all their attention.

The only domestic in Sir Peter's family whose interest had withstood the revolutionary mandates of Lady Fitz-John, was old Eleanor. Her placid disposition and the active protection of her master, whom she had nursed when an infant, preserved her from the effects of that general reform which the new sovereign had introduced. Indeed her civil docile manner had somewhat softened her lady's prejudices against old lumber; and she was at last appointed to the vicerency of the nursery, under a conviction that such a *quiet* creature would be all obedience and condescension to Mr. Babble. To this good woman the little Fitz-Johns owed their preservation during their infancy, a period always dangerous, even when theoretical philosophy does not step in to introduce the accumulated sufferings of *experiment*.

As

As Mr. Babble professed himself to be a materialist, his plan was to pinch and pare the minds of his pupils, in the same manner as the Chinese do the foot, till he had entirely expunged all the inherent vices; he then proposed to fasten on the requisite virtues. But the difficulty was to make Eleanor understand his system.

“Patience, temperance, moderation, and self command,” said this great philosopher to his humble coadjutor, “are nothing more than an arrangement of certain minute particles in the brain, which we call ideas. Now these atoms are struck off that subtle ramification of matter which is termed the sensitive soul by the memory, whose process may be aptly compared to the blacksmith’s hammer striking upon red-hot iron. You have seen the sparks fly off, nurse. I suppose those sparks resemble ideas,

D 4

which,

which, when concatenated or linked together in a chain by corroborating events, form habits, which are erroneously called virtues. You understand me, nurse?"

"Not very well, sir. Pray am I to take master and miss to the blacksmith's shop?"

"Phoo, that was an illustration, a simile. Don't you know how to distinguish between a chain of argument and an illustration? This is a very ignorant woman, Lady Fitz-John."

"Excessively so. One of Sir Peter's protégés. I keep her out of respect to his whims. Poor man! he never is partial to any but great fools. But I think, instead of attempting to *explain* your views, you had better lay down rules which she must implicitly *obey*. She has just sense enough to do as she is bid."

"Well

“ Well then, nurse, when the children are hungry you are never to feed them.”

“ Good lack a-day, sir ! pray may I ask why not ? ”

“ Because that is the time for you to assist the memory in the sublime process that I have been describing. Fasting will excite bodily pain ; and the more intense that pain, the more vehement will be the operation of the mind. The mere animal will be subdued to the intellectual, or as I call it the subtilized part of us ; and thus we shall lay the foundations of those habits which I before described.”

“ But the dear babies, sir, will cry themselves to death.”

“ Let them. It is better to die young, than to live slaves to the appetite. The passions must exhaust themselves ; and man is an independent being from his first existence. It is the very zenith of

cruelty to attempt to check any natural propensity. On your peril, never attempt to pacify them when they choose to give way to the natural ebullitions of feeling."

"Pray, sir, when am I to give them any victuals?"

"Whenever they do not express any desire for food. For, you must know that eating is an acquired propensity, and may, I am convinced, be eradicated in childhood. Cram a child when it loaths food, and its stomach rejects it. Indians can subsist on a much smaller proportion of food than Englishmen. People in a siege often cook old boots, and dine upon the covers of their arm-chairs. All habit you see. Nothing is plainer than this syllogism; 'The stomach may be brought to retrench its usual quantity of food; the stomach may be brought to digest any thing; therefore what we call food is not necessary to
animal

animal life.' But let us only suppose that we could be taught to subsist on one tenth-part of what we now consume, the earth would then be able to contain ten times its present stock of inhabitants, and thus human happiness would multiply tenfold. I hope your ladyship approves these deductions."

Lady Fitz-John nodded assent. To own the truth, Mr. Babble's ideas puzzled her almost as much as they did Eleanor; for she could not conceive that people of fashion had any call for patience, moderation, temperance, or self-command. But as the starving system promised to make Artremidorus elegantly slim, and Melisandriana sweetly fair, she ordered Eleanor to remember that she did not wish hers to be red, vulgar-looking children. After this hint she took up a book and fixed her attention on her morning studies.

Eleanor curtesied, wiped away a tear, and was hurrying away to escape from hearing any farther injunctions.

“ Stay !” exclaimed Babble. “ My system attends to all the minutiae of education. You must early accustom them to have their hours of rest interrupted. Once at least in the night, when they are in the most profound sleep, take them out of bed, shake them till they are wide awake, and, to shew them that you are not exercising any capricious tyranny, but merely acting the part of a prescient friend, give them their favourite play-things.”

“ O, sir, they never will like them at such a strange unseasonable hour.”

“ Yes they will, unless your erroneous conduct has taught them caprice ; for what a reasonable being prefers at one time it will at another. Therefore, if they then refuse their toys, it will be evident that it was a chimerical attachment
which

which made them ever seem fond of them, and therefore do you break and burn their playthings immediately."

"What must I do with the children?"

"Argue thus: I have now convinced you, by experience, of a truth which ignorant instructors would only have described to you in the faint shape of abstract reasoning. You are feeble and ignorant. Your tastes are not formed, your judgments are premature, what you admire at one instant you ——"

"I beg pardon for interrupting you, sir; but how can I make them hear what I say? Why, they will be squalling as loud as they can all the time."

"If they will not listen to reason, you may put them to bed again."

Eleanor was rejoiced at this permission, and asked leave to withdraw.

"Not yet," resumed the orator,
"Every other day do you pull off the
boy's

boy's shoes and stockings, and force him to run half an hour on the roughest gravel-walk in the garden.

"Mercy upon us! Pray, sir, won't the flints cut his poor little feet?"

"I mean that they should. Your objections, woman, prove that you are deeply versed in that false system which has corrupted the human race, by being coercive where it should be lax, and lax where it should be coercive. Revere my lenity that I do not command you to accompany the child barefoot yourself; for I conceive that a tutor ought to do every thing which his pupils do, to convince them that he is not unjust in what he requires.

"If I might but know why little master is to be served so ——"

"For once, nurse, I will condescend to enlighten your understanding. Savages have a much greater command of the muscles of the feet than the inhabi-

tants of countries falsely called civilized. Instead of our absurd custom of bracing up the ligaments, they suffer them to expand, and thus the toes acquire a pliability and elasticity equal to our fingers. If Artremidorus perseveres in this practice he may be able to write, paint, draw models in architecture, plane wood, and even perform the labours of the forge with his feet, *almost* as well as ordinary proficientes do with their fingers. Beside the improvement which the liberal arts must receive from the aid of fresh organs, consider what an important acquisition it must be to the boy to be able to use his feet in case accident should deprive him of his hands. Or, if a revolution takes place, being used to go bare-foot he will not regret the want of shoes and stockings; and if my system comes to be universally adopted, leather may be appropriated to its original purpose of human subsistence,

sistence, and sold in the flesh market like tripe, instead of being perverted to the uses of luxury.

“As to your objection that the gravel will cut his feet, I ask why should his feet be less perfectly modified than the pure Californian’s, or magnanimous New Zealander’s. But, granting that he be wounded, he will then become acquainted with pain, and pain is a necessary evil. Though I forbid all factitious restrictions, though I command you never to bid the children do such a thing, nor to tell them that they *ought* to be good, I mean that they should bow to necessity.”

“I cannot think, sir, that master and miss can be governed even as you order, unless I tell them they *must* mind what I say to them.”

“Absurd! I believe the chaos of your understanding can never be arranged in due order. My system of governing

verning consists in not governing at all. You are only to teach by action, example, inference, and circumstance. Suppose you wished to prevent them from cutting themselves, how would you proceed?"

"I would tell them not to touch a knife."

"Then you would impede their natural liberty, and weaken the power of experience. A child would argue thus: 'You do, why may not I?' and he would argue justly. Never use a knife yourself, nor let them know that there is such an implement."

"But if by chance ——"

"Then if by chance the boy gets a knife you must let him use it as he pleases. You can have no right to restrain the actions of another: he will cut himself, blood will flow; he will feel pain, he will be terrified: memory will strike off some particles from our
sub-

subtilized matter; those particles will concatenate, a habit will be engendered, and by this simple process he will in future avoid knives."

Eleanor shook her head, but did not attempt a reply.

"Proceed in this manner," continued the triumphant orator, "in whatever you would have him perform, as well as in whatever you wish him to abstain from doing. If you wish him to go to bed, shut him in a dark room, and do not let him out till he has fallen asleep. Or, when the clock strikes a particular hour, drag him up stairs, and tell him it is not your own will, but that the clock binds you both by necessity. If he resists being dressed, which I conceive natural to all who are not perverted by custom, indulge him with remaining in an unsophisticated state, till he feels that inconvenience from cold which makes him wish for
cover-

covering. If in the interim he catches an intermittent fever, more scintillations will be produced from the memory. I should even rejoice in a hectic, because in proportion as that debilitates his frame recollection will increase his mental energy.—I shall close my present lecture,” continued the eloquent Babble, “with one instruction respecting the girl. Throw her into a cistern of water every morning.”

“Dipping is a fine thing for children,” returned Eleanor, rejoiced at hearing one injunction that accorded with her own sentiments.

“My views,” resumed Babble, “extend to remote contingencies. I mean that she should be taught to swim, and for that reason you are to let her remain in the water till she is nearly exhausted.”

The astonished Eleanor here lifted up her hands and eyes.

“There

“There is but little danger in this experiment,” continued Babble calmly. “Nature, all-wise instructress! will soon direct her infant limbs to those movements that will enable her to float upon the water, and thus before she is susceptible of fear she will instinctively acquire an art that may preserve her life. In the pearl-fishery and on the coast of Terra del Fuego women make the most expert divers. In the South Sea islands they glide from rock to rock like sea-nymphs, and sport amidst tornados and hurricanes. In Greenland they accompany their husbands in their boats, soothing their labours with their soft society, and partaking both of their labours and triumphs. Whether their bodies glisten with train oil, or whether meandering lines of tattoo diversify their tender limbs, whether their perforated noses admit the pointed fish-bone, or their ears are lengthened by wooden wedges, these happy females, unrestrain-

unrestrained by our voluptuous ideas of decorum, practise this graceful agile art, which I hope soon to see the favourite accomplishment of the British fair."

"It may do for Blacks, and Turks, and Heathens," exclaimed Eleanor, whose placidity was not proof against this last injunction; "but for young ladies in a Christian country——"

An alarm of horror was instantly diffused over the philosopher's countenance at these words. He ordered Eleanor immediately out of the room, and with a faltering accent he asked Lady Fitz-John if she really thought the old woman was a Christian.

Her ladyship had been induced by her entire confidence in the elevation of Mr. Babble's views, and the liberality of his principles, to prosecute her morning studies, while he initiated the obsequious Eleanor in the abstruse system of the modern

modern philosophical education. She now laid down the "Efforts of Virtue" at a most interesting part, to ask the meaning of this inquiry. Perhaps, if the fascinating eloquence of that performance had not benumbed her faculties, she *might*, notwithstanding her love of metaphysics, have objected to some of Mr. Babble's plans, as tending to be dangerous; or her love of knowledge, and great philanthropy, might have made her request that the experiments should be first tried upon the gardener's children; and if they *survived* them, without *much* injury to their constitutions, the Fitz-Johns should be put in training.—But to return from this hypothetical digression.

Eleanor's manner of using the word Christian was repeated by Mr. Babble, who declared that he would have nothing to do with a nurse that was devoted to a gross superstition.

"Really,"

“ Really,” replied Lady Fitz-John, “ I do think her a weak well-meaning creature; and I believe she thinks Christian only a cant word, and uses it out of ignorance.”

“ Does she go to church?”

“ I am not positive.”

“ Did you ever discover her in the act of saying her prayers?”

“ I will try to recollect. I know I have seen a Bible in her hands, but probably she might not understand it. And really I make very little inquiry into these things in my family; for my time is excessively occupied, and Sunday is the only day that I have to write my cards, look over my wardrobe, or pay attention to my health. I never had a party on that day but once; and it made Sir Peter so cross, that he affronted the genteel part of the company. I believe he and the under-servants go to church, for I see nothing of them,

them, and never trouble myself to inquire."

"If she should attempt to pervert the minds of the children," continued Babble, pacing the room in great agitation.

"I really have a better opinion of her," resumed her ladyship with great candour. "She is a harmless square-elbowed drudge; and as she knows that she has no resource but the work-house if I turn her away, she will not dare to disoblige me."

Eleanor, therefore, was permitted to fill her department; where, as I have observed, her prudence and tenderness preserved the lives of both children amidst no ordinary perils and difficulties. Satisfied with having explained the *theory*, even the zealous active Babble shrunk from the wearisome attentions that were requisite to execute the *practical* part. Once a-day he stalked into

into the nursery; and, if he did not observe any thing contrary to his system in the proceedings of the moment, he only stopped to enlighten Eleanor with a few fresh suggestions, and then stalked out again. To confess a mortifying truth, Mr. Babble had some motives very dissimilar to pure philanthropy, which induced him to accept an establishment in Sir Peter's family. Owing to that contempt for riches which always marks the conduct of a great genius, his finances were rather in an intricate predicament. Beside, from some wrong concatenations, the effect of early bad discipline, his propensities more resembled man as perverted by the gross habits of society, than in the pure state of virtuous *savagism*, or when regenerated by philosophy. In plain English, he brandished his knife and fork with great dexterity at Sir Peter's table, he never objected to a cheerful glass, even

his dress underwent such a change as proved that he was no longer devoted to abstraction and simplicity. As to his amusements, though he reprobated the present taste as perverse and insane, he conceived *individual* abstinence would do little toward *general* reformation, and therefore wisely reserved his self-denial for a more enlightened æra. He found his consequence increase by this liberal conduct; every body paid court to Mr. Babble, who, though only engaged as tutor to the children, did the honours of the table for Sir Peter, was *cicisbeo* in ordinary to her ladyship, and, in fine, went by the name of *factotum* in the family.

As to lady FitzJohn, she believed herself a pattern for all mothers. Her acquaintance complimented her on her close attention to her family, assured her that they heard the dear little creatures were prodigies, and were impatient

for their *coming out*. Her ladyship gave implicit faith to these kind prognostics. She knew that one part of the account was absolute fact. I mean her *close* attention to her family; for she spent two hours every day in the nursery, and always preferred the time when she was most likely to be called down to morning visitors. The constant orders to the servants were to say, their lady was either in the lyceum or the gymnasium, and would only come down to particular friends. 'Tis true her occupation during these two hours were rather literary than maternal; for, after a kiss to each of the little ones, and a slight enquiry after their healths, she threw herself upon the sofa, and skimmed the essence of some choice morceau procured from the circulating library. If there were any good things in the composition, she committed them to memory, to sport after dinner; and if there were not, she dropped asleep.

As the little FitzJohns escaped being starved, drowned, burnt, or having their necks broke during the first seven years of their lives, Eleanor had cause to congratulate herself on the rare felicity of preserving philosophical children from any great calamity. I forbear to enlarge upon some trifling accidents, which were the inevitable consequences of Mr. Babble's liberal system; such as the destruction of an elegant gold repeater, which little Miss knocked to pieces with the poker, for having *ordered* her to go to bed. The annihilation of an elegant India cabinet, that Artremidorus, who had a mechanical turn, chopped to pieces, in order to make himself expert in the use of his set of carpenter's tools. These were traits of spirit and ingenuity, and argued dispositions infinitely transcending the value of the articles which they had demolished in exerting their *energies*. Beside, the destruction of the watch and cabinet furnished

nished mamma with two admirable stories ; but her patience was severely tried when the children, at their first beginning to feel the dawn of an inclination for the fine arts, thought proper to improve several of the family pictures, till they had entirely coated them with red ochre and lamp-black. The piece upon which the young artists exercised their taste was no other than a representation of Sir Walter FitzJohn's engagement with King Ragodrum Logdum ; in which the knight, attired in the uniform of the horse-guards, appeared in the very act of holding up the giant's head, while the falling trunk, dressed in the *costume* of Robinson Crusoe, spouted such a profusion of purple gore as covered all the fore-ground. The destruction of this vestige of hereditary greatness was a deep affliction to lady FitzJohn ; and, though many of the neighbours remembered the itinerant artist who paint-

ed it by the foot, in conformity to her ladyship's own design, she persisted in lamenting it as the most valuable heir-loom belonging to the family.

The memory of this misfortune was soon obliterated by more serious calamities. One ill-fated day, when the watchful Eleanor had been called out of the nursery, Artremidorus resolved to gratify his taste for experimental philosophy; and, having been instructed in the manner of making gunpowder by his tutor, he proceeded to mix some nitre and sulphur which he had secreted for that purpose. There is no pleasure in forming a compound without knowing that it is done right; and, though Eleanor had often cautioned him to take care of fire, he already understood that he was a free independent being, and that she had no right to controul him. Artremidorus, therefore, approached the mixture with a red-hot poker, and found

found his gunpowder *fatally* potent. The explosion broke the windows, the room was filled with smoke, and the daring little chemist wrapped in flames. Eleanor returned in time to save his life; but his face was so much scorched that it remained ever after disfigured.

To have reproved the sufferer while writhing from the agony incident to this misfortune, would have been cruel; but few people, except philosophers, would have commended his spirited undertaking. "You acted perfectly right," said Mr. Babble to his pupil while the surgeon was applying his emollients, and the boy continued to shriek with pain. "I am astonished at your lamentations. You have only exerted your indefeasible right to inquire into the mysteries of nature; and I am convinced that the associations which this incident inspires will lead you to become the first chemist of the age."

“ I don’t quite understand you, sir,” said Sir Peter in an angry tone ; “ but if thought you *encouraged* the boy to play these dangerous tricks, you should have no other opportunity of blowing my house up with gunpowder.”

“ The fault,” said Mr. Babble with great solemnity, “ rests in that ignorant beldam, who, by forbidding the boy to go near the fire, taught him disobedience, and inculcated that vehement wish which originates in opposition. Had she but permitted him to have burnt his fingers, as I enjoined her, the habit of caution would have been experimentally acquired, and all serious consequences prevented.”

Sophistry is generally successful, when employed against a plain understanding, under the influence of some strong emotion. Mr. Babble had so confounded the names and natures of vice and virtue in his common conversation, and had uttered such charming sentiments in
praise

praise of the latter, that Sir Peter, who passed most of his time in his counting-house, had really imbibed the opinion that his son's tutor was a very good sort of a man. Beside, I am compelled to observe, that his own chains were now so firmly rivetted, that any opposition to his lady's will only ended in increased subjection. He, therefore, suffered his wife to direct the resentment which he thought it his duty to feel, and poor old Eleanor was the victim on which lady FizJohn ordained it should fall. That faithful servant was dismissed with opprobrium, but not to perish in a work-house, as her lady predicted. Sir Peter's resentment soon gave way, and he privately granted her a comfortable annuity; but her heart was broken by this unmerited disgrace, and she only lived to receive the first quarter's allowance.

Let me now hasten to relate the incident which terminated Mr. Babble's em-

pire. The fertile genius and undaunted spirit of young FitzJohn, rendered him an admirable subject for a philosophical education. His mamma was persuaded that the scars in his face gave *significance* to his countenance, and all his tutor's enunciations of genius were hailed as certain prognostics. The barbarity of confining children within certain limits, and the injustice of restraining their desires, were favourite topics with Mr. Babble. Stimulated by the encouraging assurance that we are all equal and free, and that exertion increases energy, Artremidorus and his sister set out together to explore adventures through the narrow crowded streets of W——. In justice to the preceptor I must acknowledge, that he had planned an admirable drama * of "hair-breadth 'scapes," to teach his

* This incident is adopted from Rousseau's *Emilius*.

pupils,

pupils, what an ordinary instructor would have thought it sufficient to have forewarned them of, namely, that the undertaking was full of danger. But one of the chief performers failing in his part, the farce, which was only designed to pervert the morals of the children, was altered into a tragedy, founded on personal suffering. Two hours after the young adventurers had sallied forth, the boy was brought home apparently lifeless, from having been run over by a dray. The girl could not be found, having been seduced from her brother by one of those miscreants who, in many populous towns make a trade of stealing and plundering unprotected children.

Lady FitzJohn was by no means destitute of natural affection, and her distress at this dreadful catastrophe was truly pitiable. It was, however, considerably augmented by her ruling foibles, and her mortified vanity dreaded the

farcaſm, that her philoſophical ſyſtem would end in producing cripples and gypsies. A fever and delirium enfued, and, during this unavoidable interregnum of lawful authority, Sir Peter aſſumed the command. The firſt act of his reign was, the diſmiſſal of Mr. Babble, with more expreſſions of obloquy and reſentment than I chooſe to repeat, but not with more than his folly and wickedneſs juſtly merited.

CHAP. IV.

*The Pictures finished in a different Style,
by another Hand.*

THE promise of a large reward soon brought tidings of Melisandriana. She was found almost naked, and nearly exhausted, by the side of a canal, where probably her existence would have been terminated by the cruel woman into whose hands she had fallen, had not the savage been interrupted in her design by the voices of some boat-men, who were towing up a barge. The terrified child, who now supposed that every stranger she saw was a robber or murderer, the moment she was at liberty, instead of calling for assistance, hid herself among
some

some casks on the adjacent wharf, where she was found in a wretched state next morning, and restored to her parents.

Nor was the situation of Artremidorus so hopeless as was at first supposed. The injury on his head gave the surgeon most alarm; and he predicted that it might probably occasion a degree of eccentricity, and render him unfit for close application. The bones of his left leg were indeed so macerated, that even if amputation did not become necessary, the ligatures were injured, and the knee joint must remain stiff. His other hurts were not material.

Lady FitzJohn recovered slowly. If the sight of her daughter proved a cordial, the situation of her son was destructive to her wishes, which, it will be remembered, centered in his having the look and air of a gentleman. She was reconciled to the idea of his being plain, because

because she had seen instances of such a physiognomy as was almost hideous pronounced very *ton*. Gentlemen might be eccentric too ; they generally were : and, provided their extravagance had a good air, the odder their manners so much the more genteel. But, as far as her observations extended, a man of fashion must have a good person, and a hop was alike destructive to grace, ease, and agility.

The lamentable adventures which I have recited had, however, two good consequences. They drew Sir Peter a little out of the back-ground, and re-established domestic harmony. Her ladyship was one of the first to commend Mr. Babble's dismissal, observing that he had totally counteracted her intentions. " He wanted to make geniusses of my children," said she ; " but geniusses are *low* people, and I wanted the FitzJohns to make a figure in the world."

IN

In the selection of future instructors for her offspring, her ladyship determined to proceed upon the principle that the opposite of wrong must be right. Babble held, that as there is no sex in our subtilized part, of course the education of boys and girls should be conducted upon the same plan; that is to say, our nature would be improved if men became Jeffamys, and women Amazons. Now, though Lady FitzJohn had some private reasons for decrying any great share of stability and decision in the male character, and though she firmly believed that women ought to have a proper share of spirit; yet, having had the happiness to meet Lady Languish, the beauty of the year, at a public breakfast, and observing that softness, susceptibility, and an affectation of weakness almost to fragility, were the distinguishing traits of this reigning grace, the provident mother determined that her daughter

daughter should be exquisitely feminine. For this purpose she engaged Miss La Rouge to finish the young lady in the best style. This accomplished governess had once been a French milliner, then a kept mistress, and had but lately turned her attention to the science of education ; but, as she had seen a vast deal of the world, and mixed in a very conspicuous circle, Lady FitzJohn conceived that she would make Melisandriana the *very thing* in her appearance. As to any danger of corrupting the girl's morals, the lady who recommended Miss La Rouge had positively asserted that she was quite a penitent. Beside, she observed, children were seldom influenced by the precepts of their instructors, who wanted more consequence in the family to do either good or harm to their principles. If they made the girls have a good air, dress well, appear to advantage in company, and mind their lessons, reasonable

sonable people would not expect any more.

Soon after Miss La Rouge was established in the family, Lady FitzJohn had an opportunity of doing another humane action, by patronizing Mr. Pliant, a young man of very good connexions, who had been expelled the university for transgressing college rules. It was proved to her ladyship's satisfaction, that there really was no harm in the poor youth: for that he was remarkably good tempered; and, as to his principles, he really was so accommodating, that his most intimate friends did not know what they were. This amiable youth had been rusticated for a little indolence, a little extravagance, a little intemperance, and a few other venial faults, more to the disgrace of those who inhumanly enforced old, austere injunctions, than his own; since he really had only fallen into "those frailties which

which better the heart." His hopes of church preferment being thus cruelly blasted, he proposed going out as a tutor, in which capacity he would be found unexceptionable, being of a most tractable obliging disposition, ready to do any thing, and never known to contradict his superiors ; and as to learning and diligence, why he was quite as well as other people in his way. So many good qualities insured the introduction of Mr. Pliant into the FitzJohn family. Her ladyship had now a horror of a professed scholar ; she trembled at the idea of her son being taught any thing ; and all that she wanted was a sort of humble companion, who might talk, ride, shoot, fence, game, hunt, and amuse the dear boy, make him happy, and keep him out of mischief. Even Sir Peter, for whom I feel a degree of respect, was more than passive on this occasion. He listened with visible satisfaction to the description
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of Mr. Pliant's perfections, and observed, that it would be pleasant to live with a person who would never contradict him. He had, indeed, strongly objected to Miss La Rouge's establishment, having some obsolete prejudices which made him think it impossible that a lost female character could ever regain the pure lustre of innocence. In vain did his lady protest against such *narrow* notions, in vain did she declare, that they only could be said to be virtuous from choice who have once been vicious ; because it is impossible to decide justly till you have tried the comparative enjoyments of each taste. In vain did she expatiate on the magnanimity of those who, when going full speed down a smooth declivity, stop short, face about, and scramble up the sharp rocks till they gain the very summit of excellence. She added, that it was even unchristian to say that a woman "by *one* false step for ever damns
her

her fame." But Sir Peter interrupted her by observing, that a kept mistress must have made *many* false steps, that it was often convenient, and always easy, to *affect* being a penitent, but really difficult to change the heart. As to the unchristian part of the business, he begged his wife would not talk of what she did *not* understand. Sir Peter adhered to these sentiments with so much of his old pertinacity, that, though he could not prevent Miss La Rouge from being governess to his daughter, he never could bring himself to be more than coldly civil to a person whom he knew to be no better than she should be.

As it is easy to conceive how the business of education would proceed when it was conducted by a sycophant and a courtesan, I will not be very minute in my description. Artremidorus had been early taught that he was a free independent being; but the calamities
into

into which that illusion plunged him might have removed the illusion, had not Mr. Pliant, by constantly insinuating that he was a gentleman and a man of fortune, cherished the same hateful principles of self-willedness, insolence, disregard of parental authority, ingratitude, and contempt for others, though he gave them a different origin. He now heard profusion called greatness of soul, and of course he became profuse. He heard impertinence denominated proper spirit, and he became insolent. The few ideas of religion which he had derived from old Eleanor were balanced by the recollection of some of Babble's atheistical tenets; Mr Pliant had neither inclination, ability, nor leisure to touch upon such topics; and Artremidorus was determined in favour of free thinking, only because he believed it to be most fashionable. His misfortunes would have rendered close attention to any study

study improper ; but there was no danger of his cultivating a literary taste : Babble had told him, that knowledge could not be acquired by study ; and, as to Pliant, like Swift's captain, he was " sick at the sight of a book." Young FitzJohn was therefore in no danger of correcting his failings by *acquired* wisdom. His father, immersed in the perplexities and toils of business, and compelled to act a subaltern part in his own family, did little to restrain his propensities. His mother doated on him too much to know that he had a fault. Artremidorus, therefore, grew up a jest to his acquaintance, and a terror to his near connexions. His acquired vices rendered him hateful, where, notwithstanding his natural infirmities, he would have been thought amiable if he had only *wished* to please ; and his personal defects made him ridiculous in that society, where he strove
to

to shine, and to which his vanity and ignorance made him believe the foibles of high life gave him a sufficient passport, without attending to its manners, or copying its graces. Lady FitzJohn wished to see her son the *man* of fashion, but he became its ape; despised by those whom he courted, and courted by those whom he ought to have despised.

Her wishes with respect to her daughter were more successful. She became a beautiful accomplished automaton, without a mind; versed in the manners of the day, and ready to adopt any character to which the world affixed a transitory importance.

As much confusion results from an improper or undefined use of terms, let me here define my meaning of the word *world*, least I should lead the acute geographer or perspicuous philologist into the mistaken idea that I am speaking

of the whole visible creation. The world means the little set to which we are united, either by the ties of respect and love, or by those of fear and hatred. Those whom we envy for their superiority or admire for their goodness are to us the world. Explaining Miss FitzJohn's ideas by this rule, her world consisted of about twenty people of fashion, to whom she had been introduced during her winter excursion to London; and half that number of genteel families in the neighbourhood of W——, who sometimes partook of her father's hospitality, having found it convenient to have a house to put up at whenever business called them to the town. But, lest these latter should be suspected to be people whom nobody knows, on account of their visiting a tradesman, they took care to indemnify themselves for their condescension, by holding up the plain *civil* citizen and his *fine* wife and family to

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ridicule, till the FitzJohns became the standing jest of the neighbourhood.

Such was Melisandriana's world; she also had her canaille, which consisted of the wives and daughters of her fellow-citizens. Since the mania of being *somebody* has become so universally prevalent, we are content with being only "wiskies to waskies" rather than remain quiet in the shade of oblivion. Now, as none but the FitzJohns had carriages decorated by the bloody hand or the coronet stop at their doors, the less *favoured* inhabitants of W—— found a great gratification in procuring anecdotes of gentility from the liberal Melisandriana, who, notwithstanding the contempt she felt for her humble auditory, often found that the greatest pleasure of seeing a little of high life consists in being able to talk of it to others.

It was these enviable distinctions, and the adventures to which they gave birth, that furnished the luxurious treat which I and my Danbury friends enjoyed at the *conversazione* I formerly described. The Earl of Glanville's figure, it may be remembered, stood prominent upon the canvass; and we had an abstract of his good qualities in the terms generous, social, attentive, hospitable, the best taste in the world, and quite a man of fashion. "This nobleman," said her ladyship, "is quite partial to *us*; and as for Melisandriana, if one were not to allow great latitude to the expressions of a courtier ——" The young lady here interrupted her mother, and, with a pretty blush, requested her to avoid that topic. "I do not," said she with great delicacy, "suppose that there is any meaning in his assiduities; beside, he is too old for me. Yet I own he is infinitely agreeable, and a

man of *vast* good sense and spirit. Pray, madam, has not he fought two duels? and I think I have heard that he lost half his estate at faro the day he came of age." Her ladyship confirmed this statement, and proceeded to give the company the earl's history; but, as this nobleman will make a conspicuous figure in the ensuing pages, I conceive the narrative of his adventures had better come from myself; for, with all my respect for Lady FitzJohn's talents, I must own we differ in one particular. I am fond of speaking of men and things as they *really* are, whereas she had a strong predilection for wonders. She always spoke in superlatives; and whether her acquaintance were put into her black book, or her red one, from the moment of her knowing them they became *outré*, and lost to all hope of being considered as common characters. Not only was Artremidorus the most com-

complete gentleman, Melifandriana the sweetest creature, Sir Peter the most incorrigible boor, and trade the vulgarest thing in nature; but Mrs. Dizen's pretensions to taste, Mrs. Treatwell's liberality, Miss Simper's good-nature, and Mr. Overdo's politeness, were all seen through magnifying optics. If they played second fiddle dexterously, they became such faultless monsters as the world never saw; but if they presumed to vie with the FitzJohn's, or to pass them without due homage, even Nero himself had not so black a heart.

I have such a general antipathy to every thing extraordinary, that I constantly draw the teeth and pare the claws of all the lions I can catch, with a view of reducing them to the common class of domestic animals; and as I do not think that I am particularly invidious, I will remind those who are fond of keeping a *managerie*, that it seldom

turns to a good account. Exhibitions weary the attention, human nature revolts from the frequent representation of *decided* superiority; and if you will ascribe to your friends a little more eclat than they can justly pretend to in order to gratify your own *vanity*, be so merciful to their reputation as to throw in something of a failing, in order to prevent the sharp scrutiny of awakened curiosity. I do assure the world, that I am so convinced of the necessity of this circumspection, that at the very commencement of my literary career, I gave hints of my love of snuff, and attachment to cats. I have since almost acknowledged that I am afraid of Betty; and, should the world continue its liberal patronage to my lucubrations, I shall deem it prudent to hint that I have several more oddities, besides a small obliquity of vision, and a trifling irregularity in my shape. Or, by warmly contend-

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ing that a genius has a right to wear her cap awry, and to have her gown unpinned, I may preserve my *publications* from censure ; as many people will permit them to be *tolerable*, if they are but assured that when I wrote them I ought to have been dearning the holes in my stockings. .

To return to Lady FitzJohn. -Actuated by the same motive which prevents me from detailing her account of Lord Glanville, I choose to bring forward some anecdotes of herself, with which she did *not* favour us. I have already described Sir Peter as a *warm man* ; but the wealth which is ample when only applied to the wants of a frugal bachelor, is too scanty to feed the copious fountain of domestic extravagance, especially when the wife and children are alike infected by the disease of becoming people of consequence. In vain did Sir Peter enlarge his connexions,

and with unremitting assiduity post his ledgers, and balance his accounts. His receipts were continually exceeded by his payments, and, in winding up, profit and loss stood on the wrong side every year. His capital diminished, his debts increased; and, as the punctuality of his payments relaxed, he saw his rivals in trade step before him, not only in the cheapness, but in the intrinsic worth of their commodities, while his clerks, for want of employment, spent their mornings in reading novels, and their evenings in gallanting milliners' apprentices.

Among the pleasures of the married state, that of always having a faithful confidant at hand to whom one may unboresomely one's distresses is very properly enumerated. Sir Peter at the commencement of his embarrassments availed himself of this blessing; and if the prime qualities of a confidant are secrecy,

crecy, and a desire to revive extinguished hope, Lady FitzJohn possessed them in full perfection; for she never dropped the least hint of her husband's situation, even to her children, and she constantly assured him that his fears were absurd. To complete her kindness, she also endeavoured to point out a method by which these *ideal* troubles might be banished from his own mind. "The returns of business," said she, "when carried on in your dreaming, punctual way, are seldom equal to the support of a family in these expensive times. Why don't you speculate a little, my love? all the world speculates now; and the shameful prices of bread and meat, which make us all so poor, are entirely owing to speculation and monopoly. There is a combination to buy up all the corn and cattle; so do you buy up all the nails and flat-irons in England; and then you may sell them

at your own price. Or cannot you sport a scheme of your own? Any thing will do, a balloon manufactory, or a subterraneous navigation; *that* is just coming into fashion, and is likely to prove a rich mine to a man of genius. If the subscribers should be troublesome, give them now and then a new plan, and you may keep them quiet for years; or else tire out their patience. Or cannot you burn down the warehouses and gain a trifle from the insurance office? Really Sir Peter you seem quite destitute of expedients."

During this speech the good man was rather employed in wishing himself old batchelor Jones again, than in digesting his lady's hints. His attention was roused by this last suggestion, and, with as much warmth as he durst assume, he asked her if she took him for a villain.

"A villain! oh dear no. Do you think I would have married you if I had
not

not had the highest opinion of your honour. Really, my love, you quite frighten me, and I cannot think what makes you so cross to-day. Let me help you to another glass of wine. I am sure you are low-spirited. Why, these sort of things are done every day, Sir Peter, and people go into very good company afterwards. But if you are so scrupulous, only let me conjure you to hold up your head as long as you can ; and if a *crash* must come, the heavier it is the better. It really would break my heart to steal into the Gazette, like Jenkins the chandler, and to have nobody care about our misfortunes. But to have it rumoured about a month before, that the mercantile world would receive a severe shock, then, when every body was thinking whence it would come, to have it announced in an evening paper, “ An express is just arrived from W—, stating that the great

commercial house of FitzJohn has stopped payment. We scarcely ever remember so many long faces as the Change will exhibit to-day. The failure is estimated at half a million. The furniture of the villa ——” I know not how far the inventive powers of Lady FitzJohn might have extended her imaginary quotation, if a groan from Sir Peter had not checked her eloquence just as she was going to describe state beds, Venetian glasses, and gilt plate. She now directed her attention to her husband in the following, strain of consolatory tenderness: “Do drink your Madeira, Sir Peter, and don’t ruin your family by being *cow-hearted*. I am sure the children will make their way in the world, if you don’t interfere, and blast all the effects of their education. Only last night you harped upon your old string, of curtail-
ing expences, till you made Artremi-
dorus

dorus look grave, and Melifandriana ready to cry. Only think of spoiling her beautiful eyes just at the time when Lord Glanville is going to fall in love with her. The girl would marry well, depend upon it. I know she is just the creature that a man of fashion would like. So accomplished, so delicate: and as to the boy, he is almost sure Sir Brouze Harpy will buy him a borough; and if he once gets into parliament the minister will give him a place; and I hope you will allow that he will then make his fortune. I protest, when my children are established in life, I shall not care what becomes of myself. I was born in a cottage, and there I spent my happiest hours, and I will retire upon my jointure and die in one. Yes, Sir Peter, ungrateful man that you are (here the fair orator drew out her handkerchief), your strange humours often force me to regret the happy simplicity,
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the sprightly elegance of my dear father's mansion. He, poor, dear man, loved to see me happy."

Sir Peter, like his name-fake in the School for Scandal, could have told some tales of this mansion still less elegant than that of the groom and the coach-horse; but being a greater lover of domestic quiet, he persevered in that taciturnity which experience had told him was the wisest method, whenever his lady was in an *inventive* humour. At the close of her harangue he acceded to the justness of her remarks, with respect to the future greatness of his children; but gently hinted, that it would be advisable to manage the family expences with as much frugality as regard to appearances would allow; lest, from want of precaution, the *crash* should come before their establishment was complete. Her ladyship admitted the propriety of this suggestion, and began to œconomise
imme-

immediately. That is to say, she ordered the house-keeper to lock up the small beer, and to curtail the allowance of kitchen candles. She gave her undress muslins to Betty, and bought a set of dark calicoes to save washing. She sold her silver salvers to purchase glass ornaments, and refitted her apartments in the plain cottage way. Prosecuting this *prudent* design, she determined to pay a visit to her cousin Inkle, instead of making an excursion while her house was undergoing those operations of painting, white-washing, &c. which her determination to be *very careful* of her expences rendered necessary. She considered that the Inkles would be highly gratified by her company, and would certainly give her credit for her cottage furniture, especially if she hinted that perhaps Sir Peter might be piqued if they drew upon him at a time of the year when his remittances were always most confined.

Beside these motives, the distance between Danbury and W—— allowed her to hurry back the moment Lord Glanville returned to his castle; and she felt that she might leave people at a moment's warning whom she would never have visited from any other motive than convenience.

CHAP. V.

Fresh Characters. A great Deal of very high Company. A complete fine Gentleman of the old School, with a Portrait of exploded Manners, and an Apparition.

THOUGH the love of novelty, when combined with a pernicious contempt for established usages, and as pernicious a rage for rash expedients, has produced most dreadful effects, not only in the great republic of Europe, but in the habits of private life; yet, like most of our natural desires, if restrained within proper bounds, and directed to suitable objects, it may be lawfully indulged.

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For instance, propriety may suggest the want of a new garment, accommodation may hint the expediency of following a new fashion, or lassitude may indicate the utility of a change of occupation; in all these instances variety is lawful as well as charming. But let us not be craving for a new religion, a new government, a new system of morals, or a new code of law. Some of those things are in their nature *invariable*, and others are enhanced in value by that antiquity which has recorded their wisdom and utility. Nor may the love of novelty extend to the desire of a new husband, or a new wife, while the old one remains to remind us of the permanence of a tie which was contracted for the term of our joint existence. Instead of indulging factitious desires, and fastidious dislikes, let us steadily examine the *real* value of what we possess; remembering, that nothing human can be perfect, that
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the failings which we are long accustomed to are become so familiar to our habits, that they may be borne; and the virtues which we have long proved are rendered so necessary to our comforts, that we cannot be deprived of them without experiencing a painful void. I might have extended these observations to old friends, old servants, and old customs, had I not recollected that the beginning of the chapter encouraged my readers to hope for a little novelty, and therefore my habitual prosing must seem unusually unseasonable.

As the FitzJohns left Danbury the moment that certain intelligence arrived that the Earl and Lady Caroline were returned into the country, it is time my readers should be introduced to that nobleman. Instead of repeating the numerous civilities that passed between the Inkles and their illustrious friends, I shall seat the latter quietly in their travelling

velling coach, and send them post to W——. I shall also leave Mrs. Inkle determined to return her cousin's visit; and her husband hoping that Miss would soon become Lady Glanville, being convinced, from her not caring about money, that she would encourage trade as ladies of fashion ought.

The probability of the fair Melisandria's becoming a Countess must depend upon the portrait of her latent adorer. The graceful figure of the Earl of Glanville, gently bending under the withering hand of time, excited an interest in even a superficial beholder; which was increased by perceiving that his countenance was furrowed by care, and deeply tinged with a "green and yellow melancholy." His manners at times confirmed this prepossession; they were occasionally correct, conciliating and equally expressive of the courtier and the man of sense. His style of living was adapted

adapted to attract popularity ; his doors were open to every guest who could produce the slightest introduction ; his table was spread with elegant profusion ; and the amusements that Glanville castle afforded were varied with taste. The world is not so fastidious as to reject the solicitations of one who can urge so many claims to its favour ; every body of course visited Lord Glanville ; and every body pleaded the same humane motive, namely, that it was charity to try to amuse such an amiable nobleman.

The attempt, however, was by no means generally successful. The air of hilarity that diffused itself over the features of the liberal host, when twenty tongues were sounding forth his praise, was apt to be suddenly overcast, and he who but a moment before glided round the circle of admiring friends, with something pleasant to say to every body, would become lost and abstracted, fixed in

in a gloomy reverie, which even the syren song of flattery could not disturb.

Various opinions were formed in the neighbourhood respecting the cause of this extraordinary behaviour. Many believed that he was a most profound scholar; and, from the circumstance of his once naming Euclid, he was suspected of injuring his mind by too close attention to mathematics. Others, persuaded that his disease was the *cacoethes scribendi*, expected his lordship would speedily publish, and prepared a place in their libraries for an elegantly bound copy of his treatise on politics, metaphysics, rural œconomy, or any other *genteel* science. Others ascribed his want of recollection to too keen an attachment to the memory of his late Countess; while many thought that he was not quite satisfied with the sarcastic wit and exuberant gaiety of his daughter Lady Caroline. Such were the various sentiments of the
visitors

visitors at Castle Glanville. The decision of the FitzJohns, or rather of the Lady wife, was unique; for she determined that he must be love.

“Don’t you see,” said she, addressing herself to her *cara sposa*, “that the poor earl is downright miserable? and what can be the cause? A fine house, affluent fortune, high rank, extensive connexions, no comfort wanting except a wife. I wish, Sir Peter, you would attend to what I say, and leave off your odious habit of disregarding my observations.”

“I beg your pardon, my dear, I was thinking of that draft being returned, and several other awkward things. Pray what was you talking about?”

“Why Lord Glanville, to be sure; and I say he will not get rid of his melancholy till he is married.”

“I don’t think marrying likely to cure him of melancholy,” said Sir Peter with a profound sigh.

“Why

“Why not?”

“Because wives often make their husbands very miserable.”

“O fye, papa!” exclaimed Melisandriana. “I am sure you have no right to say so. Only think how *dull* our house would be without mamma. I am sure I could not bear to live in it.”

“True, my love, but your father is in one thing a philosopher; he is void of gratitude. But I suppose Sir Peter, even your phlegmatic habits will be roused when I tell you Melisandriana will soon be a Countess.”

“Oh mamma!” and “what d’ye say my lady?” re-echoed from each of her ladyship’s auditors. “I say,” continued she, “that his lordship must mean something. Such looks, such attentions, such deep-drawn sighs. I wonder they did not strike you, Sir Peter.”

“It is a great many years since I was in love,” returned the knight with a sympathetic groan.

“It will be to no purpose for him to be in love with me,” observed Melisandriana. “I hope, mamma, you would not think of my marrying a man who is old enough to be my grand-papa. Not that I should be willing to give him a flat refusal; and really I do hope that it is not me that makes him unhappy.”

In justice to this humane wish, I will inform my readers that Lord Glanville’s dejection was deeply rooted in his soul long before the above bright assemblage of beauties irradiated his castle. Nay it is possible, so thick was the mist in which melancholy had involved his soul, that even this fair prototype of the Grecian Venus might have retired unseen, if Lady Caroline had not with more malice than prudence called his attention to a *bourgeois fillette*, who was really pretty in spite of affectation and vulgarity. His lordship turned, gazed, and nodded to his daughter. If he *was* smitten, it

was at *that* moment; and Lady FitzJohn truly observed that he certainly lost two rubbers and was gammoned that very evening.

The conclusions of those who traced the earl's malady to affliction for his wife's death were not founded on more *certain* premises. Though on their marriage they had been pronounced a charming couple, just suited to each other, a few circumstances afterwards transpired which made the world suspect that the hymeneal torch cast at first but a pallid lustre, and was soon quite extinguished. To own the truth, Lord and Lady Glanville soon discovered that their tempers, habits, and inclinations were totally dissimilar. Being both remarkably well bred, they mutually agreed to give each other as little trouble as possible; and, being very prudent, they judged it expedient to carry a good appearance to the world. During the winter season, this

this amiable pair constantly met at dinner, and by affectionate looks and civil speeches convinced their guests (if they were very polite, or very ignorant of high life) that they were actually a second Admetus and Alceste. His lordship was in agonies lest the fatigues of London should overpower her ladyship's delicate health; and she lamented, that his favourite regular habits were extremely ill suited to late hours. The earl talked of giving up the post which he then held, because it deprived him of the little that he could else have enjoyed of Lady Glanville's company; and the countess never accepted an invitation till she had asked her lord if there was any chance of their having a domestic evening. He praised her natural love of retirement, she was in ecstasies with his connubial affection; and they continued to repeat each other's eulogies, till the company dispersed, and the farce ended. His

lordship then ordered his chair, her ladyship her vis-a-vis, and they met again next day, ten minutes before dinner, in the drawing-room, to regret that they had been forced to spend the preceding evening in *separate* parties.

It was matter of wonder, that this happy pair never enjoyed the calm delights of rural happiness together during the *summer* season, especially as purling streams and shady groves are the favourite abodes of tenderness and love ; but there is always some unlucky circumstance to prevent people from reaching the summit of felicity.

Lady Glanville, at her villa near town, entertained her visitors with complaints that her weak frame would not allow her to accompany her lord to his paternal mansion, of which he had sent her the most enchanting descriptions ; while at the same time he protested, that nothing but a consciousness of the duty

he owed to his affectionate yeomanry and friendly neighbours could prevail upon him to relinquish the society which he most enjoyed. And his lordship while he warmed his old family seat, and bade the wilds of Cumberland re-echo with festivity, always said that he wanted nothing but Lady Glanville to make him quite happy.

Hypocrisy is termed the tribute that vice pays to virtue. It is, indeed, an acknowledgement of superiority; and, though I detest deceit, I cannot think that manners are improved by the sinner's not only proclaiming his crimes with unblushing effrontery, but even with inverted ambition aspiring to more infamy than he is justly heir to. Reputation was the idol that Lord Glanville worshipped; he wished to be considered as the first man of the age; but he was educated in that old school of manners which deprived the jockey, the brute,

the boor, and the buffoon, of all hopes of attaining that enviable distinction. He had been taught, that if the morals of the man did not at least seem to regard decorum, an indelible shade would be thrown over his public character. He was, indeed, well assured that his lady's attachment to Major Mitford, to whom she had been formerly engaged, continued in full force ; nay, that he visited her at her villa, doubtless to join in her regrets for her husband's absence. But his lordship certainly never reached the summit of connubial liberality ; for he did not profess friendship to the man whom he suspected of supplanting him in the affections of his wedded partner. I am persuaded that he never drove the major in his phaeton ; and, though they both ranked high in the beau monde, they were never seen arm in arm in Bond-street, nor lounging together at a fruiterer's. I question if the most spirited
woman

woman of high ton would have *dared*, even for a frolic, to have complimented the Glanvilles by inviting the major to meet them. Nay, I have been informed by unquestionable authority, that the countess had never courage enough to be seen in public with her supposed gallant. I think it my duty to be very explicit in stating these circumstances, as I am aware that the revolution which has taken place in vice within these last twenty years must make such of my young readers as are hackneyed in modern manners think that I sketch the portrait of a *civil* husband with very faint colours. They have heard of men who have gloried in the criminality of their consorts; of gentlemen who trade in adultery, and seek to repair a falling fortune with the spoils of female reputation; of concerted crimes, of convenient crim-cons, of useful absences, and all the diabolical et-ceteras that form the

dreadful traffic of conjugal infidelity. But I must inform them, that before philosophism and infidelity systematized depravity, confounded names and natures, and termed criminal indulgences fulfilling the grand laws of our existence, guilt was contented with *impunity*, and did not ask for *fame*. The willing wit-tol did not then creep from his den of infamy, and bid justice tremble on its awful bench while he demanded a *reward* for being the most *contemptible* of mankind.

Two letters that passed between Lord and Lady Glanville may explain the manners of the times of which I am treating. They were, indeed, far distant from moral, and still farther from Christian rectitude; but still they have something to boast of when compared with the open licentiousness of the present day.

“ To

“ *To the Countess of GLANVILLE.*

“ Madam,

“ When you recollect the circumstances that attended our marriage, I am convinced you will acknowledge the candour and lenity which dictates my present application. I have been informed, that Major Mitford has been seen to visit you at Richmond during my absence. The severity of my answer to the person who gave me this intelligence will preserve *me* in future from the busy impertinence of officious friendship ; but *your* tranquillity must depend upon your own discretion.

“ I am well aware that your ladyship has never permitted me to dispute my rival's claim to your affections. When, in the presence of your father, you declared that Mitford was your *first*, and

should be your *only* love, I determined to save myself from the mortification of *rejected* tenderness. I never hoped for your heart, madam; I formed no romantic visions of hymeneal happiness. I have behaved like a respectful polite husband, and my remembrance signs my full acquittal.

“ I have never been so extravagant as to expect you to conform to my ideas of happiness, nor to study my temper. In these respects, by mutual agreement, the chains of wedlock have sat easy on us both. But remember, Lady Glanville, there is a jewel in your keeping which is dearer to me than life: a jewel which if you lose I shall be impowered to take *legal public justice*. Painful as such a proceeding would be to my feelings; observe, madam, your reputation must not be contaminated by the breath of slander, on pain of your being cast off an alien to my name.

In

In this respect we must be one. Take care that your imprudence does not reach a height that I *must* notice, and beware of staining the unfulfilled honour of

GLANVILLE."

"*To the Earl of* GLANVILLE.

"My lord,

"It is so impossible for me to forget the circumstances which attended our marriage, that I am concerned your lordship should waste your valuable time in recalling them to my remembrance.

"Equally superfluous is your solicitude to exculpate yourself from the censure of endeavouring to gain my affections. You might have trusted to my honour, to my justice I should say, to clear you in that point. Your delicacy taught you the impropriety of wishing to reclaim my heart from the man to whom

I devoted it, nor have you in one instance swerved from this punctilio. We so perfectly understand each other, that I wonder your lordship should take the trouble of writing to me in *your own* hand : but perhaps Jervais is ignorant that Major Mitford *often* comes to Richmond ; if so, I trust you have taken proper precautions to prevent him from opening this letter.

“ I am convinced that it would be very painful to your lordship to have our history discussed in a court of justice. The tale of Miss Aubrey would make a bad episode ; and the un sullied honour of a British peer might be contaminated by a trial for bigamy. Rest assured, my lord, that my indiscretion shall not bring on such an *éclaircissement*. I have reasons for wishing to be considered as your wife, but no motive to forget that I am *only* the injured

‘CAROLINE LEWSON.’”

Lady

Lady Townly observes, that in composing the true matrimonial sherbet she and her lord were apt to squeeze in a little too much acid. The above letters would scarcely be thought to want *pungency*; yet, to prove the superior command of temper which characterized this very high-bred couple, Lady Glanville saw masks the very evening she received her letter from his lordship: but she conducted herself with such gaiety and ease, that the Savoir-vivre club positively declared Glanville was the luckiest dog in England to possess such a divine creature. Her reply reached his lordship in Cumberland, just as he was entertaining the free and independent electors of ——. And here I must exult in one example of the superior placidity of *my* sex. I have it from good authority, that he trembled as he broke the seal, and that a livid paleness spread itself over his face while he

he muttered something very like a curse on perusing it. This dereliction from good breeding, however, was but momentary; he filled a bumper, gave Lady Glanville's health, and the toast was re-echoed by an hundred voices. The next day the valet addressed his lady, in six most affectionate lines dictated by his master, to thank her for her most welcome letter; his lordship signed it, and her ladyship's woman wrote as *kind* an answer by return of post, which Lady Glanville also authenticated with her own signature. The correspondence, thus renewed, continued on the same footing till the health of the countess, which had been for some years declining, compelled her to tear herself from her dear lord, and to try the warm baths of Montpellier. The earl, to his infinite regret, was necessitated to let the duties of the patriot triumph over the feelings of the man. A question of
great

great importance was expected to be decided in the course of the session; and, as the love of his country was his ruling passion, he entrusted what was dearer to him than life to the care of Jervais, on whose judgment and attention he had indeed cause to rely. Lady Glanville reached the place of her destination, and there fell a victim to a disease which no salubrious waters, nor health-restoring drug can relieve: The gnawing worm of discontent had lacerated her bosom with a mortal wound, and she added one more to the numerous victims of error, passion, and folly.

The reader may be assured that Lord Glanville conducted himself with great propriety on this sad occasion. The corpse was brought back to England, the funeral was conducted in the best style, his lordship was very correct in the time of his seclusion, and returned to the world with slow and measured steps.

steps. But, though the sombrous air of melancholy never after left his face, people who knew him well were not inclined to place it to the account of fond regret. At first it was observed, that it is as easy to affect sorrow as happiness; and that it is very improbable, that a man should grieve for the death of a wife whose life had been embittered by his neglect. It was even predicted, that the form of woe would be thrown aside with the "inky cloak," and that some young blooming Lady Glanville would change sober-suited melancholy into "mirth tripping on the light fantastic toe." Though similar events have happened often enough to justify such auguries, twelve years elapsed between the death of the countess and the earl's arrival at Glanville-castle, without his making another visit to the hymeneal altar.

Weary

Weary with suggesting reasons for his lordship's continued dejection, conjecture had long since acquiesced in the supposition that his treatment of his former lady hung heavy upon his conscience. This opinion was confirmed by his never more visiting his seat in Cumberland, though the ashes of his dearest wife reposed there in a stately mausoleum erected in honour of her unparalleled worth, and to perpetuate the memory of her virtues and his regret.

I cannot help adding an anecdote that gave celebrity to this tribute of conjugal esteem. The building was scarcely finished before the neighbours furnished it with an incorporeal inhabitant. A tall white figure was frequently seen, either bending over the sepulchre, or walking at some little distance. Sometimes beckoning somebody from the house, at other times wringing the hands as if overwhelmed with the deepest anguish.

Though

Though not one of all those who witnessed this extraordinary apparition had ever seen the late countess, or possessed sufficient fortitude to contemplate the features of the ghost, it was received as a certain fact in the neighbourhood, that it was no other than the buried Lady Glanville, who revisited thus the glimpses of the moon, making night "hideous." The alarm became general; at length the curate, who had protested that he would only be convinced by ocular demonstration, met the spectre as he returned from eating lamb's wool and cracknels with the housekeeper on Allhallowtide eve. On his bravely inquiring what it was, he was answered in a voice rather rough than hollow, "I am the ghost of Lady Glanville." Now though a tête-à-tête with the apparition of a woman of quality is really a novelty, perhaps even few fine gentlemen would have philosophy enough to

with for it when they were just entering on a dreary moor, in a cold moonlight night, remote from all intercourse with human beings. His reverence, therefore, without wishing her ladyship good-night, made good his retreat with all possible expedition. After ruminating on this strange occurrence, he thought that the wisest method would be to communicate the particulars to Lord Glanville, who, since he so deeply regretted his wife's death, would doubtless rejoice in an opportunity of having a little more of her company.

I am sorry to say that the event did not answer the curate's expectations; for though he took care to have his own testimony confirmed by that of numerous witnesses, the earl was not only incredulous, but extremely indignant at the information; and he was so far from rewarding the friend who wished to procure him such an unexpected happiness, that

that he esteemed this instance of gross credulity and ill-breeding a sufficient provocation to justify him in refusing to fulfil his promise of remunerating the pious labours of uneducated simplicity with a vicarage of twenty pounds a year, which had just fallen vacant. With much apparent zeal for the welfare of the establishment, his lordship declared, that his honour would not permit him to place a man in a responsible office who was the dupe of such *illiberal* superstition, and that his conscience required him as a patron to examine with the most scrupulous minuteness the abilities of those whom he appointed to his benefices. The reader will judge whether his lordship's justice did not verge on severe austerity in the above instance. My own aversion against general reflections makes me protest against his illiberality in frequently repeating this adventure, and using it as a confirma-

firmation of his favourite tenet, that priests were either bigots or knaves. But Lord Glanville is not the only great man who has quarrelled with the Christian priesthood through dislike of a monitor.

The earl left England soon after the above incident, and before a robust Cambrian peasant had discovered Lady Glanville's ghost to be no other than the under-gardener, who had contrived to carry on his amour with the dairymaid with greater secrecy, and more spirit, by connecting it with the double plot of terrifying the neighbourhood. I will here request the world to take notice, that this is the *second* ghost I have already introduced into this novel. It has been objected to me as a great want of taste, that I have constantly rejected the *marvellous* in my former publications. Though I might plead that pertinacity which is the privilege of my
sister-

sisterhood, for an excuse in adhering to my own system of probability, the natural *pliability* of my temper has induced me to yield to the general opinion. And I do assure the literary world, whether they consist of journalists and reviewers, or of fine gentlemen and ladies, that I only wait for their being *unanimous* in their censures, and I will then remedy *all* my other errors. But while one learned critic points that out as a blemish which another has commended as a beauty, I think it is adviseable not to imitate the old man and his son, who endeavoured to please every body in their method of driving their ass to market. Instead, therefore, of tossing my beast into the river in a fit of petulance, the public may be assured, that whenever I have goods to lade him with I shall drive him to the fair in my own *odd* way, till I am *clearly told how I may improve his paces.*

CHAP. VI.

*Satan appears in the Similitude of an
Angel of Light.*

DURING Lord Glanville's absence from England he visited the most celebrated places in Italy, France, and Germany; devoting his time to the education of his only daughter, and to the improvement of his taste in *vertù*. As his ample fortune justified carelessness of expence, his table was thronged by literati, and his museum crowded with antiques, gems, medals, statues, and other relics of "ingenious Greece or mighty Rome." Thus, while improving his own taste, and forming Lady Caroline's upon the purest models, he
roved

roved from place to place, every where devoting his attention to the acquisition of science, and to the enjoyment of the elegant pleasures of society.

But there was one science which he could not acquire, and one pleasure which he never could taste, the happy art of forgetfulness, and the delight of a peaceful conscience. Man is born to trouble; sorrow and care are in some degree his inevitable portion; but a ten-fold portion of sorrow shall be the lot of him who willingly and determinately deviates from the plain path of rectitude. The thorns of care are scattered all over the world, nor is the pillow of the Christian free from these painful inmates; but if you ask me where their points are sharpest, and their wounds most envenomed, I will direct you to the bosom of the Infidel.

Lord Glanville's manners were formed in the school of Chesterfield, that is to say,

say, they were corrected by the opinion of the world, and restrained by prudential and interested motives. He had imbibed many of his early opinions from Shaftsbury and Bolingbroke; his prejudices against religion received insuperable strength from the sarcasms of Voltaire; and in the varying sophisms of Rousseau he found convincing arguments against revelation. Yet, as his political creed led him to acknowledge the utility of religion as a state engine, he considered that it would be both indecorous and unwise for a member of the highest court of legislature to ridicule publicly what was essential to the well-being of the community, and intimately interwoven with the principles of the constitution. Except, therefore, in the company of his most chosen intimates, Lord Glanville never indulged his secret rancour, farther than by a slight innuendo against the wiles of priestcraft, or

a general invective on the evils of bigotry and superstition. He ever made it a rule to attend divine service twice during his residence at his country seat; and, like Rousseau's exemplary Savoyard, with outward propriety, and inward incredulity, he mocked his Maker with the lip-homage of an unbelieving heart. I must allow, that Lord Glanville's deism was far short of the candour and philosophy of our present theophilanthropists; for he patronized charity-schools, and all other means of promoting religious knowledge among the lower classes. He even went so far as to insist on a serious sense of duty, among the requisites that form the usual inquiries in the choice of a servant; for he seemed to think infidelity a sort of aristocratic privilege, and, like the mysteries of Ceres, improper to be disclosed to the profane. So far from wishing the whole human race to rise

rise

rise in rebellion against their Creator, he would not have been displeased if only himself and a few chosen associates had been released from the thralldom of future responsibility. From these principles we may readily conceive what must be his ruling passion. Selfishness was the predominant quality in Lord Glanville's mind; and, indeed, we may call it a constituent part of every infidel. The unfortunate being whose hopes terminate on this side the grave must endeavour to make the best of his little all of existence: for, as he denies reverfionary blessings, he cannot afford to part with a present good; and the well-sounding ideas of moral fitness and general utility, when balanced against the cravings of appetite, will fly up "and kick the beam."

I am aware that I continually lay myself open to the censure of illiberality, and upon the present occasion I wish

to speak by the card. I by no means deny that devils have sometimes performed great and generous actions; I only assert that they cannot feel benevolence and magnanimity. The mammon of unrighteousness, like the false deities of paganism, varies its form, and different offerings must be prepared for its different altars. It is not always the voluptuous Pan, the sordid Plutus, or the ambitious Phaeton: it often wears a more decorous form, and passes for the goddess of worldly wisdom. Lord Glanville's idol was the love of praise; and many specious actions and much regard to appearance are required from those who live upon the ærial food of adulation and popular applause. I much doubt whether a mind, in which this agitating passion prevails over principle and sober reason, does not endure greater privations than those of the anchoret. But this is not the only instance

stance in which the slaves of sin submit to severer bondage than religion ever requires from her sincerest votaries.

The man who, rejecting the supremacy of Omniscience, regulates his conduct by the consideration of what the world will say of him, quits a sure and lasting recompense for solicitude and disappointment. Lord Glanville's history is designed to exemplify this observation; he pursued fame by indirect courses, and he reaped disappointment.

Pope accuses our master-passion of the voracity of "*swallowing up the rest.*" I rather think that it is merely a tyrant, who tries to impose chains which the refractory slaves often resist, and that "man's little kingdom suffers then the nature of an insurrection." Vanity is said to be incompatible with love; yet during the early period of his life Lord Glanville's heart was sufficiently touched with the tender passion

to sacrifice the views of ambition to the feelings of the heart. No future efforts, though unrestrained by respect for human sanctions, or by reverence for divine laws, could dissolve the fatal contract which virtuous beauty induced him to form with Sophia Aubrey, before he attained the age of emancipation from parental control. Her humble situation, that of a milliner's apprentice at Oxford, attracted that herd of admirers who esteem themselves licensed to insult modesty and to corrupt innocence, when they find it destitute of powerful protection. But to the bashful loveliness of seventeen Sophia Aubrey joined the prudence of a more advanced age; and so well was her discreet resolution of retiring from flattery and observation seconded by the vigilance of the person to whose care she was committed, that many a lounging gownsmen fauntered away hour after hour on the
broad

broad pavement of the high-street, in fruitless hope of seeing the “ goddesses of his idolatry,” who like an eastern queen continued invisible.

I will here acquaint my young readers with some obsolete maxims *formerly* in general use, though I believe now so thoroughly antiquated that the recollection of them is only preserved in old writings, and the chronicles of past times. It appears from these records, that it was *actually* once thought, that retiredness, seclusion, and reserve added to the power of beauty; and that the heart of man used to be assailed by sap and stratagem. “ If you put the lordly creature on his guard,” said our great, great, great grand-mothers to their daughters, “ you teach him to resist your power; and if you do not carry his affections by storm at the first assault, your strength is so much impaired that you cannot make a second attack.

But if at every interview you *steal* upon him with the discovery of some fresh excellence, above all, if, instead of avowing your design against his liberty, you appear to *retire* from his observation, as if you *feared* that he was going to commence hostilities against you, you throw him off his guard, and he walks into your toils blindfold." I have *modernized* the sentiments as well as the language of our venerable predecessors in the above quotation, which may rather be called a paraphrase than an extract; being convinced, that if I had given the speech verbatim nobody would have understood what was meant by the "duties of the holy estate of marriage, instituted for mutual comfort," or what was implied by a young woman's early acquiring habits of obedience, and domestic occupation. Yet I must observe, that in *those* days there was not so large a stock of unmarried ladies

ladies upon hand, as since the idea of wife and help-mate have been disunited; and it is only out of pure compassion to the increasing quantity of very amiable, very accomplished, and very sweet-tempered young creatures, whom we hourly meet, dancing like the loose-robed graces, or singing like the warbling muses, that I suggest the expedient of their becoming less prodigal of their charms. I know they will utter some smart sarcasm at the advice of a Mrs. Prudentia; but I am not to be discouraged by a little pertness, and, as I frequently tell my friends, I have not remained unmarried for want of good offers.

I have lately got into such a rambling humour, that my story makes small progress.—Soon after the Earl of Glanville (then Lord Malvern) had been entered at college, his attention was roused by the description which his friends gave

him of the uncommon beauty, and yet more uncommon reserve, of a fair milliner, whose discretion seemed proof against all Cupid's artillery of sighs and glances. Nay, though the defeated god had called in Apollo to his aid, neither billet-doux, ode, sonnet, nor madrigal, made any impression. As to presents, Argus guarded the door, and not so much as a tooth-pick case could gain admittance. In fine, to the eternal disgrace of Oxford, it was feared that one young beauty would escape from its walls, without having her innocence corrupted, or even her understanding impaired by adulation.

Lord Malvern listened with astonishment. He had hitherto seen little to turn his attention to affairs of gallantry, and he submitted to the homage which his rank compelled him to pay to the fair, rather as a means of exalting his own character to the claim of finish-
ed

ed politeness, than from the pleasure he derived from the soft smiles and elegant volubility of some highly rouged duchesses, or tastefully patched spinster of fashion. These were objects that he every day saw; and even the simple rustic who loiters to attract attention, and with the blush of pleasure and the smile of credulity answers flattery with, "Really, sir, I don't believe what you say," might be met with: but a girl who would not be talked to, in short who would scarcely be seen, was even fifty years ago a phænomenon.

What only Cæsar can do, is worthy the attention of Cæsar. Lord Malvern undertook the task of seducing Sophy Aubrey to vice, or at least of degrading her to folly; and he gloried in the idea of the superiority which his conquest would give him over the unskilful assailants who had abandoned the glorious achievement in despair.

Such were the motives that actuated Lord Malvern to engage in this most infamous design, which, I am sorry to say, the manners of the gay world have never sufficiently discountenanced. Many a vain youth has, like my hero, been induced to act the part of the prince of darkness, not from the impetuosity of criminal appetites, but from a wish for that reputation which perverted opinion is ready to bestow on the elegant engaging seducer. Had infamy been attached to the attempt, Lord Malvern would have desisted and been happy. But mark the sequel:

“The Heavens are just, and of our pleasant
vices

“Make instruments to scourge us.”

His only chance of seeing the amiable Sophy was at church, whither she constantly went, accompanied by her mistress, who was also her aunt. A large
hat

hat concealed so much of her face, that the only observation Lord Malvern could make in three or four attempts was, that her person was gracefully formed, and her behaviour modest, devout, and attentive. Fortune at last so far befriended him, that a sudden gust of wind blew off this envious shade, while he was near enough to pick it up, and present it to her at a moment when her natural loveliness (heightened by the alarm which such an accident's happening in the street before many witnesses occasioned) was almost irresistible. His elegant bow was returned by a slight curtesy : no farther intercourse was possible ; for Mrs. Atkins reproved her carelessness, and, taking hold of her arm, hurried her home.

When Lord Malvern calculated on the emotions that he should raise in the heart of the innocent Sophia, he never supposed it probable that his own could catch

catch any perturbation. He entered into this affair merely as an amusement and a relief from severe studies ; but he soon found, that whether he opened Xenophon or Polybius, Sophia's picture was impressed on the leaves. Even the bottle could not dispel the illusion ; this cursory glance had struck deep, and he had no better answer to give to the friends who inquired about the progress of his amour, than that he thought her the most beautiful creature he had ever seen.

My abhorrence of wonders makes me caution my readers not to suppose that Sophia's face was so perfectly divine, as that a glimpse of it should strike with the instantaneous effect of lightning ; nor do I mean to insinuate that Lord Malvern was impelled by any physical necessity to fall in love. I am rather of opinion, that he often met as graceful figures at Ranelagh, and encountered as brilliant
eyes

eyes at the opera, without perceiving his tranquillity at all affected.

Circumstances and situations confer a nominal value on objects, and the eyes that were peeping at him through the sticks of a fan were not worth a glance in return. He well knew that his rank in life permitted him to choose a partner among the circles of fashion; and if he was struck at the appearance of a young lady, he had only to knock at her father's door and take a second view. But it seemed to be infinitely more difficult to unbar Mrs. Atkins's, and difficulty enhanced the pleasure. While he pondered on the means of procuring Sophia, her image became indelibly impressed on his mind, haunted his sleeping and waking thoughts, and at last rendered success necessary to his repose. Such is the common process by which we inflame our passions; we give them that impetuosity of which we accuse our nature.

The

The first proof of Lord Malvern's heart being interested in the pursuit of Miss Aubrey was, his concealing from his friends all the measures that he took to procure an introduction to her. They rallied him on his breach of promise, and accused him of being a downright lover; he repelled the charge with as much indignation as Benedick, and by his vehemence *confirmed* their suspicions. It was then agreed that they would watch him and frustrate his designs. This resolution was too late to be effectual; the purchase of three pair of point ruffles, and a quantity of Brussels lace, for a present to his sisters, had already procured his lordship a shop acquaintance with Mrs. Atkins; and though Sophy was not visible, he had the pleasure of knowing that he was under the same roof with her, while he admired her aunt's taste in making Prussian caps, and pinking the trimming of negligees, in which he declared she excelled

excellled the princess's milliner. We have all our weak side; and these were the excellencies on which Mrs. Atkins so particularly prided herself, that she deviated from her usual prudence, and called Sophy from the back shop to try on a cap which his lordship meant to purchase for his younger sister, if he could be convinced that it was *becoming*. She would not be so illiberal as to confound a young gentleman who was so constant at church, so proper in his behaviour, so fond of his sisters, and, above all, such an excellent *ready-money* customer, with the rakes who followed Sophia. Beside, his attention to the poor girl was so proper; he never attempted to confuse her by silly speeches, he seemed while she stayed to be only admiring the cap, and he waited till she was out of hearing before he observed that she was very handsome. Nay, he even warned her aunt of the danger to which

which beauty was exposed in the haunts of dissipated youth.

A person like Mrs. Atkins, well-meaning, prudent, but not deeply versed in the ways of the world, can only resist *common* dissemblers. Thrown off her guard by the deepest proficiency in Satanic art, she readily intrusted Lord Malvern with the particulars of Sophia's history. He learned that she was the daughter of a clergyman; that her education had been conducted on a liberal and religious plan; that she had an only brother who had chosen a military life; and that on her father's death, his little savings being found inadequate to the support of herself and her mother, she had resigned her share of them to increase the comforts of her infirm parent, and determined to depend upon her own industry for her subsistence. "Many an anxious hour does she cost me," continued Mrs. Atkins; "but,

“but, though she was born to better prospects, she submits to all I require with such sweetness and good humour, that I grow fonder of her every day, and would lay down my life to make her happy.”

In a little time after this conversation, Ensign Aubrey informed his sister that he had been most unexpectedly raised to the rank of lieutenant. He had waited on his colonel in consequence of this promotion, and learnt from him that he owed it to the intercession of Lord Malvern, a nobleman to whom he was utterly unknown. He inquired whether his sister could give him any information why this stranger, of whom he heard the most amiable character, should interest himself in his affairs. Before Sophy could recover from the agreeable trepidation into which this letter threw her, she received one from her mother, written with a tremulous hand, acquainting

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quainting her that she had been nominated to receive twenty pounds per annum from the trust for relieving the widows of deceased clergymen, and that this service was also traced to the friendly interference of Lord Malvern.

It so *happened*, that his lordship called at Mrs. Atkins's shop that very evening, to order another Prussian cap, the former having become the decided favourite of both his sisters; but he had scarcely time to express his wants, before Mrs. Atkins with clasped hands, intreated heaven to bless his goodness. She was too familiar, she said; she knew it was wrong to take liberties with people of his rank; but if he would condescend to step into the back shop, there was one who wished to thank him too. Lord Malvern was not *displeased* at this request, he readily followed Mrs. Atkins; and while he received the grateful acknowledgments of innocence, he felt for a moment the purest

purest delight. For a *moment* I say ; for as soon as consciousness reminded him of the design of his liberality, dark machinations, guilty desires, and all the turmoil of restless agitation, occupied the place of joy and love.

After a little conversation, which enabled him to perceive that a cultivated mind was added to a lovely person, he rose to take leave. Mrs. Atkins was ashamed to ask, but if he would do her the honour to accept a cup of tea, her hyson was very much approved, Sophy should fetch some of the cakes which she had made yesterday, and they would have a holiday. Lord Malvern was all affability. He praised the tea, devoured the cakes, and the hauteur of rank gradually wore off. He amused them with anecdotes of high life, loaded the vices of the age with execration ; and after a caution to the lovely Sophy, expressed in almost fraternal language, he request-

ed that whenever he could any way serve her or her family she would remember there was *one* man who could pay innocence and beauty a *disinterested* homage. A tear and a blush were Miss Aubrey's only answer; and Malvern, declaring that he would sometimes avail himself of Mrs. Atkins's hospitality to ask how the family did, retired, more in love than he chose to avow even to himself, and convinced that he had made a deep impression on Sophia's grateful unsuspecting heart.

CHAP. VII.

The Lamb intrusted to the Wolf.

AFFAIRS were in this train when Lord Malvern's friends commenced their operations to defeat his projects. The prime agent in the plot was a jolly Bacchanalian, who possessed one quality in perfection, some call it honesty, some bluntness, but I will denominate it the gift of *blundering*. This gentleman volunteered his services to inform Mrs. Atkins that Lord Malvern had a design against her niece's honour; but, full of the hope of out-generalling so great a general, and "flushed with the Tuscan grape," he communicated his plan to a
person

person who happened to be a confidential friend of Malvern's, the night before he intended to put it in execution. His lordship, therefore, had an opportunity of countermining, and prepared Mrs. Atkins for the reception of a most outrageous libertine of the name of O'Ryan, who had fallen in love with Sophy. That gentleman's intimations, therefore, were answered by a request that he would walk out of the shop; and all his protestations, though backed with oaths, only tended to increase the good woman's abhorrence of his wickedness, till she even threatened to complain of his conduct to the vice-chancellor.

Lord Malvern, thus left master of the field, took care to gain every possible advantage from the enemy's defeat. He called but seldom, and sometimes went away without seeing Sophy. He always assigned his chariness of her reputation as the reason why he so sparingly indulged

dulged himself in the pleasure which her society afforded. When with her, he chiefly conversed about her mother, or he spoke of her brother's future prospects, her father's character, or the pleasures and incidents of her childhood. What an interesting picture did her replies present! Suffice it to say, that her affecting simplicity often staggered the cruelty of a libertine.

The conversation frequently turned on books. Here too her intelligence, docility, and modesty, gave her fresh charms. "By heaven!" he would sometimes say to himself, "this girl is a paragon! she would do honour to *any* station." In justice to his lordship's prudence, I will observe, that as often as he found this sentiment rising to his lips, he constantly hurried from Mrs. Atkins's, with a charge to Sophia to continue good, and she would then find him her constant friend. Sophy's heart over-

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flowed with an undefined sentiment, she called it gratitude to her protector, and admiration of genuine goodness. Who does not foresee that it will prove to have been love for a specious villain?

With the certainty of being in love, Lord Malvern's difficulties increased. There was so much native modesty in this lovely girl, her virtue was so truly the effect of principle, that he saw not the least hope of tempting her to stray from the paths of duty. To lure her from her aunt's protection, and seize by force what fraud could not gain, was an undertaking full of danger, and difficulty too. Rumour would speak loudly against such a transaction; and infamy, not fame, would be the reward of the seducer who was compelled to resort to such a barbarous procedure.

To relinquish the pursuit seemed impossible. His heart told him that Sophia was necessary to his repose; he perceived

the interest that he had gained in her affections; and in his brightest hours, when he indulged in a fairy vision of innocent bliss, the image of domestic felicity, and Sophy as the companion of his future life, were constantly united. But horror! shame! disgrace! A peer of the realm marry a milliner's apprentice! Impossible! I dwell the longer on this part of my narrative, from a hope that it may deter some future adventurer from wandering in the oblique paths of vice, by recollecting that Lord Malvern was induced by vanity to seduce innocence, and never after enjoyed *one* quiet hour.

In the midst of his machinations he was summoned to London, to attend the sick bed of his father. Lord Glanville's fondness for his son was extreme, and on his recovery from a severe fit of the gout he determined that his darling should leave Oxford, and reside in his own
I 2 house,

house, under the tuition of a private governor. This arrangement heightened Lord Malvern's difficulties, and he made one effort to drive the image of Sophia from his bosom. He had the heroism to persevere a week in the resolution of never seeing her more; but having during that time sufficiently studied his tutor's character, he ventured to propose a private jaunt to Oxford, and Mr. O'Faughn agreed to accompany him.

Unresolved how to act, he knocked at Mrs. Atkins's door, which was opened by Sophy in deep mourning, and with a countenance as sad as her garment. A glow of pleasure lighted up her face as she exclaimed, "Indeed! Lord Malvern, is it you? They told me you had left Oxford, and I fancied that I had lost *all* my friends." Tears accompanied these words, and she continued in the same artless style to describe her perplexities in consequence of the sudden death of
her

her aunt. "She has left me her business," said she; "but I must not carry it on in such a place as this. I sometimes think that it would be most adviseable to return to my mother. Your goodness has increased her income; and the sale of my aunt's effects, with a little plain-work, will support me. Will your lordship give me your opinion? This *once* I will ask it; but indeed you must never call again."

"Not call on you, Sophy!" exclaimed Malvern violently agitated.

"No, my lord; consider the situation of a poor girl who has only her reputation to depend upon. I know your goodness to me is all pure benevolence; but the world will not do credit to the virtues of your noble heart. If it be once whispered that you are seen within these doors, I shall be held up to ridicule and shame; and how can I support that?"

“ You shall be secured from shame and ridicule, and made a mark for envy and admiration, by being placed, in the station which your transcendent worth deserves,” returned his lordship. The Orondates style is difficult, and I am so conscious that I cannot support it, that I must omit the remainder of the speech; only observing, that, betrayed by the impulse of the moment, Malvern made an *unequivocal* offer of his hand and heart.

I am aware that a true heroine would on this occasion have proportioned the steadiness of her refusal to the frankness of her lover’s proposals, and I once thought of making use of a speech that has lain by me many years, beginning with “ Generous man, your disinterestedness calls for equal greatness of soul on my part,” and ending with “ Adieu for ever;” but having lost all my taste for prodigies, I think it better not
to

to engraft the wisdom of thirty on the simplicity of eighteen, or to expect that an unprotected artless girl, tenderly attached to a seemingly faultless lover, would act with the circumspection of a Minerva. Sophy listened with almost breathless rapture to this unexpected but not undesired declaration, believed all her lover's vows, admitted all his reasons in favour of a private marriage, and when he left her ruminated on her future prospects with grateful joy.

Not so Lord Malvern. He cursed his own precipitation, which could not wait to seize the advantages that might arise from the change in Sophy's situation. His perturbation of mind was so visible in his countenance when he returned to his apartment, that it could not escape his tutor's attention. This man, with no other real recommendation but learning, had risen in the world by closely observing Sir Pertinax Macsycophant's

phant's rule of "*booing* to my lord and lady," and by concealing his profligate heart under the appearance of specious manners. He saw sufficient reasons in the declining health of Lord Glanville, to turn his attention to the rising star, who would soon be "lord of the ascendant." Beside three valuable rectories, his pupil would have the power of bestowing some good lay sinecures on a *friend who served him with fidelity*. His acuteness soon discovered the cause of Lord Malvern's chagrin, and he as soon removed it by an expedient which diabolical guilt could alone invent.

He observed, that the laws respecting marriage were not *yet* changed, and therefore it was possible for a gentleman to contract this engagement under circumstances that would deprive the lady of the power of future proof. "A little forethought," said he, "often saves much perplexity : I doubt not, my lord,
Miss

Miss Aubrey highly deserves the honour that you are going to bestow upon her; but, put the case that in future you find her *less* amiable than you now suppose, will it not be very convenient to have it in your power to dissolve the bond without being obliged to publish your juvenile inconsideration to the world? The lady will be equally happy while she *thinks* herself your wife, as if she *really* were so; and as it is only in the event of her misbehaviour that you will put in practice your power of repudiating her, your punishment of her will be just."

Impelled by the vehemence of love, and awed by the suggestions of ambition, Malvern had not sufficient justice to reject this nefarious scheme. The generous but imprudent Sophia had already consented that the ceremony should be performed in the most private manner. She was a perfect novice, and felt such

an entire confidence in her deceiver, as precluded suspicion. At his urgent intreaty she even yielded to his proposal of concealing her *real* situation from all her own relations; and Mrs. Aubrey was informed, that her daughter had given up business to reside in London, with a lady who had taken her for a companion.

Lord Malvern placed his bride in an elegant lodging, regulated her establishment with liberal propriety, and for one year preferred her, to every earthly object. Delighted at the facility with which she acquired the accomplishments and manners of polished life, he sometimes anticipated the whisper of admiration which would circulate through the drawing-room if he should venture to draw this gem of "purest ray serene" from obscurity, and bid it blaze in the coronet of Glanville. He almost doubted whether this would not be the surest

surest way of acquiring a *distinguished* reputation, and he repeatedly founded the words "disinterested affection," "generosity," "probity," and "independent manliness of character," against "milliner," "dupe," "boyish imprudence" and "ignorance of the world," without being able to tell which were most sonorous.

While his mind continued in this fluctuating state, his servant one morning announced a gentleman of the name of Captain Aubrey. Joy, gratitude, and affection flushed the officer's countenance, while his lordship's muscles stiffened into the rigid attitude of distant ceremony. Aubrey came not only to thank Lord Malvern for the favour he had personally received, and to acknowledge his benevolent interference in behalf of infirmity and poverty; but to bless the more than generous, the unprecedented nobleness of his conduct to his

beloved sister. "My lord," said he, "I left my respected mother broken-hearted, and complaining that my sister was become a kept mistress, and that her gray hairs would be brought to the grave with sorrow. I came to town determined to take vengeance on Sophy's seducer. Aye, by my soul's best hopes, my lord, I would have done it, even if I had found him among the royal blood. But I find the dear girl, instead of being betrayed and corrupted, in the protection of the most honourable of men; and when I tell my mother that Sophy is your wife——"

"Really, Captain Aubrey, I am concerned that an engagement this morning should render me incapable of ——"

"I understand you, my lord. I spoke too loud. I know your peculiar situation; but pardon the warmth of an honest heart, oppressed with the weight of obligation. I will indeed be prudent,
be

be silent as the grave. I do not wish you to acknowledge your marriage. It may offend the earl. Sophia is happy. She has a just confidence in your attachment and integrity. Only let *me* have the inexpressible pleasure to hear *you confirm* what *she* has *told* me ; and may I be branded as a villain and a coward if I disclose the secret. Even when I tell my mother that Sophy is the wife of a man of honour, she shall not know your name."

There are incidents that will disconcert the most consummate masters in the sciences of intrigue and deception. Lord Malvern was so totally unprepared for this interview, that he could advance no further in his reply than, " Captain Aubrey—I don't understand—as to honour, sir, I must beseech you to recollect —" when the entrance of his father at that critical moment shortened the period of his mortification, and transferred

ferred the hesitation and confusion that accompanies conscious errors from Malvern's behaviour to that of the gallant Aubrey, who, alarmed at the idea of the misfortunes which his affectionate indiscretion might have occasioned, and persuaded that his lordship's embarrassment proceeded from an apprehension that his father had overheard the conversation, after an awkward attempt to refer his words to some other person, withdrew.

The next visit that Lord Malvern made his lady was the first in which she had ever seen the gloomy humours of the husband prevail over the tenderness of the lover. He reproached her with a breach of her promise to conceal their marriage from every human being; and added, that after the sacrifices he had made to her, he might at least have expected *fidelity* on her side. Alarmed at this unexpected charge, Sophia asserted

ferted her innocence ; and this drew from Lord Malvern an account of Captain Aubreys visit. Lady Malvern was not covered with confusion at this eclclaircissement. “ I confess,” said she, “ that I owned to him I was the wife of a man of honour. My present situation is too apparent to allow me to deny the matronly character ; and how else could I have pacified his indignation ? for he swore to wash away my shame in my seducer’s blood. Or how could I remove from my head the curse of my distracted mother, whose sufferings, on being told that I was a woman of intrigue, have almost brought her to the grave ? I said no more than what I have above repeated ; and I am alike ignorant how he discovered *my* lodgings, or found out *your* name. But, my dearest lord, do not fear Edward’s indiscretion ; though impetuous in his temper he has an honest heart, and my father grounded

grounded him in the principles of truth and integrity. His calling upon you was a hasty thought, dictated by gratitude; and, as you doubtless confirmed what I had told him, be assured (for he is neither vain, selfish, nor frivolous) he will never trouble you more."

"You have been very indiscreet, Sophy," resumed his lordship, in that sullen tone which error often assumes when it wishes to remove censure from itself, and to fix it on the far inferior faults of another. "By your folly my hereditary estate is made to depend upon the secrecy of a man whose officiousness betrays his weakness. I now insist upon your immediately abjuring all further communication with your family; and for this end I shall immediately remove you to some place where they cannot discover you.—You hesitate, I see; as I have much more to enjoin let me suggest that my welfare and my wishes ought
in

in your estimation to be paramount to all other considerations."

"I do not hesitate, my lord; I only lament your displeasure."

"Then hasten to remove it. Promise me, by all your best and dearest hopes, notwithstanding every inducement to the contrary, even if you should fancy I gave you some apparent provocations, promise me to place that implicit reliance on my honour, that you never will, by anticipating the discovery which I shall make at the proper time, plunge both ourselves and our offspring in *permanent* calamities."

"If I could doubt your honour, my lord, I should be indeed wretched; I cheerfully promise to preserve the most inviolable secrecy, and to act entirely in subservience to your wishes. But surely, when you talk of giving me provocations, you are only imitating Henry in your favourite poem of the Nut-brown

brown Maid, and preparing your Emma's mind for evils that can never happen. No, my dearest lord," continued she with a smile of tender confidence, "I am too well assured of the interest which you must take in the character of your wife, and the legitimacy of your child, to fear that your conduct will ever shake my implicit faith."

His lordship generously answered, that he was perfectly satisfied; and Sophia, at his request, promise to forget what was past. Memory is not a passive quality; and, though Lady Malvern endeavoured to divert her thoughts from this painful subject, whenever her lord's visits were less frequent, or his behaviour to her less kind, she could not help supposing that these might be the commencement of his *threatened* provocations. These recollections were more frequent after the birth of her son, and often as she hushed him to repose on
her

her bosom an involuntary tear would steal down her cheek at the apprehension that perhaps he was the *heir* of disgrace and misfortune.

Indeed the behaviour of Lord Malvern had for some time been such as must have excited terror in a mind less devoted to implicit faith than that of the artless affectionate Sophia. His visits gradually became short and ceremonious; his behaviour spoke "the dull'd edge of fated appetite;" and his attentions to his little boy were more indicative of civil necessity, than of the glowing tenderness of parental affection. It could not escape the mother's observation, that no chance emotion ever so far betrayed his prudence, as to induce him to call the child by the name of Harry Glanville, even when no one was present who might take advantage of such an indiscretion. Doubt is generally progressive, especially if allied to
fear

fear ; and Sophia now began to consider how often her fond husband had accosted her by the endearing title of wife. It was a matter of astonishment, as well as alarm, when she reflected that he had never once used that name.

Four years passed away, partly embittered by fear and partly soothed with hope, when Lady Malvern read in a daily paper an account of the death of the Earl of Glanville, at his town residence, after a tedious illness. This event, to which she had long looked forward as the termination of her perplexities, brought with it an immediate increase. It was more than a month since she had seen her lord. He had persuaded her that he was going into Norfolk, where the shooting season had commenced ; and he told her he should be too much occupied by his favourite diversion to write often. One letter she had received, but it spoke
nothing

nothing of his father's declining health, a circumstance which must have deeply interested him, when considered in every point of view. Had he really no pleasure in the prospect of being relieved from the misery of a clandestine connexion, or had filial piety so far overpowered his feelings during the last moments of his father's life, as to make him entirely forget the anxious situation of his wife and child.

While Lady Malvern continued meditating on a subject so full of portentous appearances, a gentleman was announced, and Mr. O'Faughn entered her apartment. She immediately recollected him to be the person who had performed the office of nuptial father at her marriage, and suspicion and terror yielded for a moment to expectation and joy. After a little common-place prelude, Mr. O'Faughn informed her, that Lord Malvern, having some particular

cular reasons to be displeased with the conduct of the people with whom she lodged, wished her to remove to a more eligible situation; and as he fancied his little boy looked unwell when he last saw him, his parental tenderness suggested the idea that some pure country air was necessary to reinvigorate his debilitated frame. Mr. O'Faughn added, that his noble friend was excessively concerned that a very painful and important duty rendered it impossible for him to attend her on her journey himself; but if she would accept of the faithful services of one who sincerely admired her many virtues, *he* would do himself the honour to be her escorte. Lady Malvern willingly accepted this proposal. She saw in it a project to give her a most agreeable surprize, and she determined (though she saw through the scheme) to affect ignorance, and to seem not to know of the death of Lord Glan-

Glanville till she was recognized as the wife of the present earl, by being placed in one of his country-seats. She admired the delicacy of her dearest lord in intrusting her upon this occasion to the care of one who so well knew her *full* right to the honours she was going to enjoy, and she cheerfully prepared for a journey that was to terminate in her being acknowledged Countess of Glanville.

They continued travelling three days, but the distance was beguiled by the most pleasing conversation. Mr. O'Faughn was never weary of talking of the honour, popularity, generosity, public spirit, and filial piety of his noble friend; and Sophia listened without satiety to various anecdotes which placed these virtues in the most conspicuous light. At length the carriages stopped, not at a proud baronial residence in the midst of a large park, surrounded by trees coeval with the Gothic pile

pile, but at a small farm house in the wilds of Glamorganshire. No train of numerous attendants in gorgeous liveries hastened to welcome their lovely mistress, and to caress the smiling heir of all these honours; but one half-attired rustic, with an abrupt curtesy, in uncouth language, requested madam and the babe to walk in. Away fled all the gaudy trappings which a pardonable vanity had suggested to Sophia's imagination, and with them fled objects infinitely more valuable, but equally the visionary creation of fancy; I mean the faith and honour of her husband.

I will pass over the ensuing scene, conscious that I could not do it justice in a minute description. When Sophia called upon O'Faughn, as he would answer it at "the great day of count," to remind her base seducer that she was his lawful wife, the vile accessory denied all knowledge of the transaction to which

which she alluded. When she called upon her cruel perjured husband, O'Faughn protested that her *protector* was most constant in his attachments, and would never desert her, unless the violence of her passions compelled him to form a connexion where his repose might be less endangered. She threatened to proclaim her wrongs to the world; the faithful guardian of a most unholy trust besought her to recollect, that she had promised Lord Malvern that all his secrets should be safe in her keeping. Miss Aubrey had not been educated in the school of *refined* morality. She did not conceive that the baseness and perjury of another was an acquittal to a mind conscious of having contracted a solemn engagement. The multitude of the wicked was not with her a reason for joining the guilty band. Dropping on her knees, with recollected meekness, she committed her cause to

Him who is the friend of the friendless. Then turning to her terrified child, she clasped it to her bosom with strong maternal tenderness. She could articulate no more than "Poor *deserted* orphan!" but her convulsive throbs witnessed that it had still *one* tender parent.

The night was spent in confusion and extreme distress. The owners of the dwelling where she was placed understood little of her language, and were prepossessed by the account that O'Faughn had given of her; namely, that she was a young lady of fashion, who had disgraced herself by her bad conduct, and had since been disordered in her mind. The next morning he demanded an interview, and he then found that her situation would justify his statement. Her intellects were indeed deeply affected by the shock that she had sustained. His crafty sagacity had contrived to deprive her of the attendance

tendance of her own servants, whom he had left at the last stage, under the care of a subaltern agent, with orders to take them back to London, and dismiss them with handsome gratuities, under the pretence that their lady had found servants who suited her better in her new situation. They were ignorant of the true names of the parties whom they had served, and therefore could make no discoveries; and O'Faughn thought it would be impossible for the wretched Sophia, left distracted among strangers, to make her incoherent tale understood: he therefore returned to London, satisfied that he had relieved his noble friend from a very disagreeable incumbrance, at a small expence, and without the least danger to his reputation.

Beside the common motive of satiety, the young earl had an additional reason for wishing to be released from the ma-

trimonial fetters. The same lying spirit that had promised to lead him to the temple of fame through the labyrinth of depravity, had lately assured him that the proud structure might most easily be approached by the avenue of folly. "The little fet" that constituted his world conferred considerable applause on gaming; for though they allowed it to be destructive of fortune and peace of mind, yet there was so much of courageous carelessness and agitating uncertainty in the pursuit, that the vice really wore a very gentlemanlike appearance, and promised to come into high celebrity. Lord Malvern had offered several thousands at the shrine of this Moloch; and, as it was absolutely impossible for him, on his accession to the title, to contract the establishment which his father had supported, without being termed mean spirited, it was necessary that the fortune of the future Lady Glanville

ville should be sufficient to discharge all incumbrances. The man of the world will see the force of this argument, and allow that Sophia and her innocent boy must be abandoned. It is probable too, that he will suppose Lord Glanville might silence the pangs of conscience, by recollecting that an annuity of two hundred a year was *affluence* compared to the *penury* of Miss Aubrey's early life; and that nobody, therefore, could reproach him with having reduced the poor girl to a worse situation than that in which he found her. Those who thus argue will do well to attend to the sequel of this history.

CHAP. VIII.

*Superior Skill in the Art of tormenting
proves fatal to the Possessor of that
eminent Qualification.*

BEAUTY spread her gossamer snare for the Earl of Glanville; but a man of consummate prudence will not be twice attracted by a *gilded* bait. Sophia Aubrey joined innocence, virtue, tenderness, and delicacy to a lovely person; yet, when possessed of these, he soon wished for a more *substantial* dower. He determined, that if he should a second time grow weary of the nuptial yoke, he would repent, like Falstaff's Prince Hal, "not in sackcloth and ashes, but in new silk and old sack." Fortifying himself with this resolution, he remained

mained like another Achilles invulnerable amid showers of arrows. The combat between the belligerent powers was indeed singular, as both parties were in pursuit of non-entities. The ladies directed their fire at the earl's *heart*, a part which I suspect nature omitted in his composition ; and the earl with equal vigilance reconnoitred their estates, which too frequently were situated in *Terra Incognita*. Had *he* been " used to the melting mood," he must have been softened into true connubial docility ; and had the daughter of King Midas been among the competitors, and possessed of her father's power of transmutation, she would have become Lady Glanville.

Two years rolled away ; the fair assailants continued talking of the young earl's carriages and liveries, and he added a few names to the list of the greatest fortunes in England, which he kept in

his common-place book. At length a very unpleasant circumstance occurred. Nothing was at first known, except that his lordship had been called out by an officer, whom he had once materially served; and that the *ungrateful* wretch fell (as he deserved) mortally wounded at the first fire. The earl (though it was supposed that he might easily have been excused in a court of justice for only *accepting* a challenge) was so extremely distressed at this unfortunate event, that he immediately left his native country. Every one pitied such an amiable nobleman, and observed that keenness of his feelings was a proof of the goodness of his heart. But in a few days the death of the young officer transferred pity to the greatest sufferer. Soon after hints were given, but with the greatest caution, that there was a dreadful tale to tell, respecting a sister seduced and abandoned to disgrace and
distrac-

distraction. The restless spirit of curiosity eagerly pursued these suggestions; but if even myself and my Danbury friends had formed the inquest, I am afraid we could not have made any clear discoveries. The surgeon who attended the wounded man from the field, and witnessed his last agonies, would only say that he should disclose nothing unless properly questioned.

I doubt not, however, that the reader's feelings have already recognized the fallen officer. It was indeed poor Aubrey, who returned from severe service in the West Indies, full of hope that he should see his sister established in that rank which his fond affection deemed her worthy to fill. He had determined to gratify his fraternal pride by taking a distant view of her in her new station, and he resolved not to force himself on Lord Glanville's notice, unless he was convinced that it would give pleasure to

all parties. He was astonished that he did not hear of Lady Glanville's beauty and merit on his first arrival in London. He blamed the world for its want of discernment ; and, impatient to hear its opinion of his sister, he made inquiries, the answers to which harrowed up his soul. Instead of *avoiding*, he now *sought* the Earl of Glanville with determined perseverance, and angrily demanded to see his sister. His lordship replied, with as much composure as it was in his power to assume, that it was not in his power to communicate the lady's address ; but that he believed she was well and happy. " Not in your power to tell me the residence of your *wife* !" returned the indignant Aubrey. " My lord, I must have this matter clearly explained." His lordship answered, that he really was at a loss to understand the captain's language, as he was quite unconscious of deserving the honour.

honourable name of husband. More warmth followed on Aubrey's side, and more civil sarcasms on his lordship's. The interview terminated in a *rencontre* in Hyde Park, where Aubrey expiated his rash forgetfulness of the laws of God and man with his life; while Glanville retired from the fatal field, loaded with the far deeper sin of *systematic persevering* depravity. Nor let it be supposed, that in flying from human punishment he escaped the inevitable lot of guilt; he carried the scorpion remorse in his own bosom, and the soul-harrowing resemblance of the dying Aubrey and the distracted Sophia followed him to every clime through which he passed, like Cain, a fugitive and a wanderer.

It was in one of those unhappy moments in which the sinner flies for refuge to the hopes of annihilation, that Lord Glanville betook himself to the desperate solace of infidelity. He had,

indeed, ample cause to wish that the grave would not give up its cold inhabitant, "with twenty mortal murders on their crowns ;" and as a man with good constitution at seven and twenty might reasonably look forward to an ample share of the good things of life's feast, he imagined that forty years hence he should be very well contented to yield his seat at the banquet to some younger guest, and to drop into eternal sleep. He knew, indeed, that diseases and accidents sometimes terminated the sublunary career at an earlier period than the term which he had chosen for his own existence ; but then he resolved to be extremely careful of his health, to avoid all dangerous pursuits, and to conduct himself with the prudence of one who was conscious that all his hopes were set upon *one* die. The reader will recollect, that, at the time I speak of, the immortalizing elixir was not so much

much as dreamt of, nor were mechanics brought to such high perfection as to furnish an apparatus to prevent people from being killed by lightning, drowned, burnt, or breaking their necks. Certainly if these, or any similar instances of the perfectibility of human science, had been then known, Lord Glanville would have liberally patronized such happy inventions.

After many years banishment, the earl began to hope that time had so far obliterated the remembrance of his past offences, as to permit him to return to his native country, and there to obtain that political rank and popular applause for which he had long panted. Aubrey had no relations to prosecute his murderer; the unpleasant rumours attending that transaction had died away, and indeed his lordship could urge many circumstances to extenuate his offence in that particular. He had been, it was
well

well known, grossly insulted in his own house; he had endeavoured to decline the challenge; after Aubrey fell, his attentions to him were most humane and generous; he had supplied him with the best surgical aid, and had even deputed his particular friend O'Faughn to attend him, with a charge not to leave him while life remained. His lordship hoped that if the story should be revived, as the cause of the dispute had been but imperfectly known, he might disguise and colour it in the way that would best suit his own reputation; and he was persuaded that no one *could* know that he had long practised firing at a mark before he took aim at the breast of the unfortunate Aubrey. As to Sophia, the last intelligence he had received of that unhappy girl was, that she had recovered her senses, but was fallen into a deep decline. Consumption ranks among *incurable* diseases; doubtless, therefore, she

she would soon be no more, and thus the whole business was got rid of, at the expence of four thousand pounds that had been vested in the funds, and the income annually remitted to maintain the boy.

His lordship, therefore, once more set forward as a matrimonial adventurer; and, though the youthful bloom on his cheek had deepened into manly brown, an earl at forty with a large *unincumbered* estate, is no bad match. The contest of rival belles was, however, this time soon terminated; and the sprightly charms of Lady Caroline Lewson prevailed over every competitor. She had, indeed, many advantages; her fortune was handsome, and this, though his lordship had brought his own finances into a desirable state during his travels, was very agreeable to a man who loved splendour and courted popularity. Her connexions were among the first nobility; a delightful

ful inducement to one who wished to be mightiest among the mighty, and whose hereditary consequence had been impaired by absence. She loved gaiety; no bad qualification in a wife to a person who had quarrelled with self-reflection. Wit and vivacity were her chief characteristics; and these must be agreeable additions to domestic society, especially as his lordship found that philosophy did not always banish tormenting thoughts.

With many a “wanton beck and wreathing smile” did Lady Caroline invite the earl’s attention; but no sooner was that object gained, than the manners of the charmer changed, and he who, as a common acquaintance, seemed almost courted, when a professed lover was treated with cold indifference. Lord Glanville had really been amused by this lady’s agreeable manners, and he felt all his pride roused at her disdain. Rather than give the world room to say that

that his offers had been rejected, he bravely resolved to encounter the miseries which a capricious disposition must inflict upon the person who is most exposed to its tyranny. Perhaps he also relied on the infallibility of his recipe to break female hearts ; for I am persuaded that love was only the ostensible reason that determined him to press the suit with the father, with an eagerness proportioned to the young lady's increasing disregard. His behaviour was so full of urbanity, and his settlements so liberal, that Lord Lewson did not confine himself to a mere assent. He *commanded* his daughter to receive the earl of Glanville as her husband.

An affecting scene now ensued. Though, from the errors of a polished education, and a life too dissipated to admit of reflection, Lady Caroline had been induced to act the coquet, by aspiring to universal admiration ; her principles

ciples were good, and her heart most sincerely devoted to a brave young officer, the son of a man of fortune, and her father's particular friend. Lord Lewson had been induced to approve of this connexion, which began in childhood, and had been confirmed by all the romantic ties of interchanged letters, pictures, rings, and other pledges of eternal love. Just at the period when the lady entered upon the career of high life, duty called her lover to a distant part of the world, and she unhappily resolved to dispel the real sorrow which she felt at his absence, by indulging in the blameable amusement of "bringing home hearts by dozens." To prove her fidelity to her dear Mitford, she regularly sent him a voluminous account of her triumphs; and he, in return, acquainted his charmer with the laurels that he had acquired in the bloody field of Mars. She had just dispatched a
packet

packet filled with an account of Lord Glanville's subjugation, in which she sketched his character with precision, and described his dolorous indignation at finding himself fast in her toils, with infinite wit, when she received her father's mandate to receive this slighted captive, this man whom she at once despised and hated, as her husband. The lovely tyrants who are now in the zenith of female power, and pity poor Lady Caroline's distress will do well to ask themselves if it was wholly undeserved.

In vain did the poor lady plead her dislike, nay her abhorrence of the man whom her father had chosen; Lord Lewson had witnessed the pains she *once* took to ensnare him. In vain did she refer to the promise she had once given Mitford; her behaviour during his absence resembled any other character more than that of a *constant* nymph.

If

If she reminded her father of his own consent, Lord Lewson could reply that it was known to be conditional, and ceased on his supposing his daughter's affections had veered to another object. She wept, knelt, intreated; all was termed caprice and affectation. She even informed Lord Glanville of the state of her heart. But the earl was persuaded that the "superior dignity of a husband who would ever love her with manly tendernefs," would soon efface every trace of a juvenile attachment. His honour, he also observed, was too far pledged to permit him to retreat; and he could not but hope that Lady Caroline's distress proceeded rather from the amiable terrors of virgin delicacy, than from the motive which she had been pleased to suggest. He assured Lord Lewson, that he had studied his daughter's character, that he saw all its weaknesses, and almost fancied them virtues;

virtues ; since he was convinced that they proceeded from the most excellent intentions. Lord Lewson believed that his daughter's happiness must be safe, when committed to the guardianship of a man who could utter such noble sentiments ; and the weeping, trembling, giddy, romantic Lady Caroline became Countess of Glanville : not, however, till she had bid Mitford an eternal adieu, in terms dictated by her father, but transcribed with such an unsteady hand, and blotted with so many tears, that it was evident her former ties would predominate over those which she was going to form.

An union thus formed did not promise happiness ; but fortune, or rather let me say that *seemingly* fortuitous combination of circumstances, which conducts human affairs *often* to the temporal punishment of the wicked, but *always* to the eternal advantage of the good, soon blasted the
faint

faint hope that even *tolerable* comfort could result from these ill-omened nuptials. A favourite servant of the bride's, who had lived with her from her infancy, was confined in the country by ill health the very winter that her lady made the conquest so fatal to her repose. Soon after the nuptials Margaret was summoned to attend her mistress, who still chose to have her about her person. As this woman possessed a good heart, and a sound judgment, she endeavoured to reconcile the mourner to her lot, and to direct her attention to the practice of those duties which would in time soften the rigour of her fate. But in the midst of these prudent consolations, she was interrupted by the appearance of her new lord. Margaret trembled and turned pale at the sight of him, the sound of his voice increased her consternation. Trembling with excessive horror, she faintly inquired if his name had
not

not been Herbert. Lord Glanville started at that suggestion as if a lion had crossed him in his path. The features of Margaret reminded him of poor Sophy's attendant; he endeavoured to give her impertinence a severe reproof; but she had already fainted, and as his weak knees could no longer support him, he was glad to throw himself upon the sofa and to conceal his guilty face.

This scene was perfectly *intelligible* to the young countess. The story of Mrs. Herbert, her loveliness, meekness, and entire seclusion, the suspicious conduct of her husband, her fondness for her little boy, and the mysterious event which terminated Margaret's knowledge of her history, had been often repeated, as nursery tales, and caused many a tear to stream "o'er the soft features of" Lady Caroline's "*April* face." It was easy to connect this story and that of the unfortunate Aubrey, to whose catastrophe

trophe she had often heard people allude ; and Lady Glanville's quick imagination saw the seducer of innocence, and the murderer of its protector, in the person of her wedded lord. Pride and resentment had taken full possession of her soul ; and, instead of regretting these indelible stains in her husband's character, she seemed pleased with any circumstances that tended to strengthen those discordant passions. She stood for some moments enjoying his humiliation, and contrasting his guilty shame with those ideas of unsullied virtue which she had associated with the image of her beloved Mitford, before she left him to *endeavour* to recover his recollection.

Indeed Lord Glanville's situation was humiliating in the extreme. Independent of his wish to support the character of correct morals, the declining state of Lord Lewson's health gave him a cogent reason to wish that nothing might transpire

pire to his disadvantage. The old earl had several *good things* to bestow, and his wife's portion was made in some degree to depend upon his own conduct. Thus circumstanced, even the proud spirit of Lord Glanville allowed that it would be best to temporize; but *how* would be the difficulty. Supposing Margaret not inaccessible to bribes, he perceived his lady knew too much of Sophia's history to allow him to *disclaim* that connexion, especially since his own confusion must have confirmed all her suspicions.

He could, therefore, only gild his faults with a little *amiable* candour, and a few soft touches of *convenient* morality. He requested an interview with Lady Glanville, admitted that he had fallen into the common faults of youth, spoke of human frailty, of the irresistible power which artful beauty might acquire in a heart formed of such *penetrable* materials

as his own, rejoiced in his early escape from the syren's snare, lamented the unfortunate rencontre with her ruffian brother, and depicted the miseries with which one indiscretion had clouded his morn of life, with more glowing colours than a man of fashion would choose to employ when merely acknowledging the fault of having kept a mistress. He thence adverted to his now brightened prospects; and contrasted the criminal pleasures resulting from affairs of gallantry, with the pure delights that flow from an union with a woman of honour: but, as he raised his eyes to see the tear of forgiveness steal down Lady Glanville's moistened cheek, he was surprised at hearing her burst into a loud laugh at the antics of her lap-dog; and, instead of articulating his pardon in *broken* accents, requesting that he would "only look at the dear grotesque creature." "But really, my lord," continued

nued she, "I do now recollect that you said you wished to talk with me about something of importance; may I request that you would begin again?"

The most eloquent of orators would have been disconcerted at such an unexpected turn. Lord Glanville bit his lips, attempted to renew the subject, and had proceeded as far as the name of Aubrey, when the countess begged him not to give himself any trouble. It was impossible, she observed, that his lordship's past or present conduct could be of the least importance to her. She added, if he had any thing to communicate respecting Major Mitford, she owned the intelligence would be interesting. Lord Glanville, in a tone of sullen anger, intreated her to remember that she was now a wife. "I am unwilling," returned the lady with quickness, "to claim a title which is *rather doubtful*; but I shall always remember that you are the

man to whom my father *believes* me married. You have penetration, my lord; doubtless you see the expediency of avoiding disquisitions that may lead to unpleasant altercations, and interrupt the *harmony* now so happily subsisting between us." Her manner precluded all possibility of reply on the earl's part; and the arrangement that I have already mentioned was adopted by tacit agreement.

When a wedded pair, refining upon the original institution of marriage, convert it into a state of perpetual hostility, the combatants, doubtless, find great advantage in that intimate union which allows them to make continual progress in the art of tormenting; and, as perfect *good*, or I would rather call it *high* breeding, must not descend to those gross vulgarisms, by which "Ralph of the mill," and "Sue of the green" let each other know that they are really quarrelling, it is

is obliged to have recourse to some double-distilled corroding acid; in order to counteract the suavity of its muscles, and the harmoniousness of its cadences. Lady Glanville's invention could not supply her with one hint which seemed so likely to wring her husband's "galled spirit," as by treating him in public with an affectation of tenderness and respect, proportioned to the civil contempt that characterized her manner at their private interviews. She was continually complimenting his lordship on his rectitude and integrity, she praised the open sincerity of his conduct; and if any one congratulated her upon her happiness in being united to such an *honourable* man, she always answered that he had more than fulfilled her expectations. Sometimes his lordship's consummate modesty was so much affected by her eulogiums, that he was obliged to leave the room. His only chance was to get

the conversation first into his own hands, and then Lady Glanville's sweetness of temper, prudence, and connubial virtues, were dressed in as gorgeous apparel as she had bestowed on his good *principles*. Our sex is accused of loving flattery; probably that may be the reason why the earl found it impossible to subdue the non-chalance of the countess, who generally leaned her arms upon the table, fixed her eyes upon his face, and when he had completed the delineation of her character declared it was so adorned by his kind partiality that she really did not know herself.

Hitherto the advantage was all on Lady Glanville's side; but the return of Major Mitford to England gave the earl a decided victory. I have already observed, that Lady Glanville was a woman of principle; but I only mean by that declaration, that she avoided the *extremes* of guilt. Her principles, as we
have

already seen, did not prevent her from gratifying her pride and revenge by punishing her offending husband, instead of endeavouring to reclaim him. The same imprudent, and indeed culpable design, induced her still further to exasperate him by frequent interviews with the man whom she acknowledged to be the possessor of her heart. Confident in her own virtue, she disowned all idea of impropriety while enjoying the society that taste and affection led her to prefer; and as she constantly took care that the major's visits should be sanctioned by the presence of some third person of unquestionable character, she imagined that her reputation was secured from reproach. This unhappy scheme brought with it the punishment which its blameable motive deserved. That attachment which time and absence had partly subdued was revived by the presence of the beloved object. She contrasted Mitford's

tender, respectful, yet constrained attentions, with Glanville's hypocritical assiduities; the genuine worth of sterling integrity, with the polished sentimental tinsel worn by a professed dissembler; the happiness that she *might* have enjoyed, with the misery that *was* her portion. These thoughts perpetually occurred to her imagination, and in time erased all the playful ideas of wit and vivacity; and, instead of torturing Lord Glanville by her scheme of a platonic attachment, she found her own tranquillity destroyed.

Ruminating on the peculiar circumstances of her situation, the unhappy countess was sometimes tempted to bring forward the story of Sophia Aubrey, whom, by some papers that had accidentally fallen into her hands, she discovered to have been Lord Glanville's *legal* wife. As the existence of that lady at the time of her marriage could
be

be proved, the earl's second contract was null; and the tie that separated her from her beloved Mitford was of course dissolved. She was restrained from pursuing this design by affection to her only daughter, who she considered would, by such a discovery, be degraded from the rank of heiress of an illustrious house, and immense wealth, and placed in the despised state of an illegitimate orphan.

While maternal tenderness thus successfully combated Lady Glanville's affection for her lover, slander, regardless of the precautions by which she supposed her reputation was secured, added her name to the shameful list of faithless wives. The giddy and the criminal eagerly believed a tale that gratified spleen, and gave guilt the diabolical satisfaction of exulting in the extended empire of iniquity. The story soon got into the public prints; and the portraits of the countess and her supposed paramour

exhibited in a popular publication, intended to countenance vice by familiarizing thoughtless minds with the history of its triumphs dressed in the soft language of apologetical subtlety. If *only* Lord Glanville had seen these portraits, if the rumours of her dishonour had *only* reached his ears, the countess would have sung Io triumphant; but she was not of a disposition to support public infamy. Her spirit drooped under the imputation, and conscience whose still small voice had escaped observation during the uproar of the passions, now prevented her from solacing herself with the comforts of innocence, by whispering many a *wilful* deviation from the straight path of rectitude. In vain did she tear herself from the pleasure she most enjoyed, by declining Mirford's visits, and *endeavouring* to think of him no more; the bosom monitor now told her, that this renunciation should have taken place at the altar
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when she became Lord Glanville's wife. Sometimes she endeavoured to ascribe all her miseries to the conduct of her husband and her father; but again she remembered her youthful coquetries, and she felt compelled to do Lord Glanville the justice of acknowledging, that she had invariably adhered to her *original* design of making him *miserable*. Remorse now heightened the effects of chagrin and disgust, and dissipation no longer afforded an interval of ease. Lady Glanville possessed great susceptibility; she fancied herself exposed to the taunt of scorn; she every where met cool friends and sarcastic observers; her melancholy increased, till she could no longer wear even that exterior of cheerfulness which is a necessary passport to the circles of fashion. I have already told the result. Let those who severely condemn this unhappy woman beware of forming an indissoluble tie with a

mind determined to disclaim its obligations. If "Jove laughed at lovers' oaths," the Christian Deity will not *lightly* pass over the wanton breach of those solemn obligations which are sanctioned by his unalterable laws.

CHAP. IX.

A modern Melange ; consisting of Tragedy, Comedy, Romance, Farce, and a little of the Pantomime.

My readers, doubtless, are all of opinion, that the long narrative which I have given of Lord Glanville's married life is not very favourable to the fair Melisandria's hope of a coronet ; and they will probably ascribe the earl's dejection to a more rankling wound than the "blind archer" ever inflicted on amorous sixty-eight.

Some circumstances, however, soon transpired, that seemed to favour Lady FitzJohn's prognostics. In the first place, his lordship certainly was remarkably
attentive

attentive to the whole family. He intreated that Mr. Artremidorus would follow his game over his manors; he took snuff twice out of Sir Peter's box, with an excuse that it was so excellent he could not refrain from being troublesome; and he so much admired her ladyship's cabriolet chairs, that he begged to know where he might order a set like them. But to crown the whole, on being appealed to respecting the figure of a French dancer, who reigned the Helen of the day, he observed that she was the exact prototype of Miss Fitz-John. Her ladyship gave Sir Peter a significant nod, and could scarcely refrain from saying "There's for you," while Lady Caroline bit her lips, it was *supposed*, from vexation.

But this was not all. Soon after his return to the castle, Lord Glanville's melancholy evidently increased, and he was observed to devote a considerable degree of

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of attention to the reading of some papers which he always carefully deposited in his cabinet when interrupted in the perusal. Lady Caroline's eye once glanced over the superscription, and she plainly read "Letters from Mr. Brudenell." There happened to be an eminent solicitor of that name, whom it was fashionable to consult on the score of settlements, and it was *possible* these letters might be on that subject.

To make the matter still plainer, his lordship one morning, instead of hurrying to his study, as was his custom after breakfast, remained in the library; and, by hinting to his daughter that he wished she would keep herself disengaged, soon gained an opportunity for private conversation. Lady Caroline consequently, as soon as the company had withdrawn, placed herself in an attentive posture, with her eyes fixed on the superb time-piece which was placed beneath the
bust

bust of Xenophon. A profound silence of one hour ensued, only interrupted by his lordship's frequent sighs. *None* of my readers need be told that *sighing is a sign of love*.

Lady Caroline had now recourse to her netting-box ; but she laid it down on her father's beginning to hem, and requesting her to be attentive, and she again contemplated the ornaments of the time-piece. At length the earl so far subdued his taciturnity as to ask her if she thought Glanville castle dull. Her ladyship answered, " Sometimes ;" and all again was silent.

" Should you," resumed his lordship after another pause, " like a companion of your own sex, and nearly of your own age?"

" It will depend," replied her ladyship, " upon her disposition, and the circumstances under which she is introduced."

" I am

“ I am persuaded, Caroline,” resumed his lordship, “ that your long experience of my confidence and affection has left you little to apprehend on *those* points. You know that I have hitherto sacrificed my own peculiar wishes to what I conceive to be your welfare with invariable generosity. If the scene should now change, if my own peace of mind—I mean if my own comforts—Pshaw, I cannot exactly explain myself—If the duty I owe to my family—I wonder what ails me, I am remarkably agitated this morning.”

“ I do not wonder at it,” replied Lady Caroline, who thought the above hints a little ominous of a mother-in-law. She then, with great *sangfroid*, observed that the wind was easterly.

“ Indeed !” exclaimed his lordship ; “ then it must have veered two points since I examined the weather-cock this morning. I am always glad to have
these

these sensations accounted for. An awkward dizziness, a strange palpitation——”

“ Very disagreeable symptoms indeed at your lordship’s age,” observed Lady Caroline with sarcastic emphasis.

His lordship was one of those very wise people who “ smile at no jest.” He asked his daughter, if his friend Signior Pelazzo did not complain of a fluttering at his heart, and a difficulty of breathing, three months before he died.

“ Yes certainly,” returned the lady.

“ And what did his physicians prescribe?”

“ Exercise and his native air. But they never mentioned a young companion.”

“ Yet he died, though I know he conformed exactly to their prescription. Certainly the art of physic is lost. Its professors are mere coxcomical disputants, and the lives of the human race are sacrificed to the experiments of empirics.

pirics. They too recommended me to try *my native* air, and I must own I think my cough less rigid since I came to Glanville castle. I would have you speak ingenuously Caroline; do my symptoms of atrophy increase?"

"I rather think, my lord, you look paler."

"Well, that is a good sign; for my colour was hectic."

"And somewhat thinner surely."

"All favourable symptoms; that proceeds from my being less hydropical. My appetite too improves; I relished a chicken yesterday without any stimulant. I am satisfied with myself; for I am convinced that it is only an easterly wind that has disordered me this morning."

"Has your lordship any thing further to communicate?"

"You must be sensible that I have a pleasure in confiding to you all my secrets. The liberal plan on which I have educated

educated you has happily substituted an enlarged reciprocity of sentiment, instead of the contracted bond of command and obedience. When I say that I am in expectation of some *particular* friends, I conceive that I ensure them such a welcome from you as will testify how truly our minds are in unison."

It has been often observed, that an adherence to system not only benumbs our intellectual powers, but actually suspends the free use of our bodily faculties. I am unwilling that philosophy should be deprived of the benefit of a remark which has been so liberally assigned to the *sole* use of those who venerate the customs and the institutions of past ages. Lord Glanville had educated his daughter in the principles of investigation and independence, as explained by the newest commentary on ratiocination, and he saw in her conduct an exemplification of all his enlarged ideas. Now, as all
my

my readers may not be gifted with those scientific optics, which cannot only *refuse* to see what is *visible*, but also *can* discern what does not *exist*, it may not be amiss to inform them of some of the consequences which *were* to result from the earl's ideas of education; else they may be apt to discover nothing in the preceding conversation, except that the earl was afraid of dying, and Lady Caroline afraid of a mother in law: whereas his lordship meant it for implicit confidence on his part, and the young lady for sympathetic acquiescence on her's.

Lord Glanville then intended that his daughter, though feminine in her person, and attractive in her manners, should possess a masculine mind, and be in every respect superior to the little vanities, weaknesses, and terrors of her sex. Her taste was to be correct, her judgment unclouded by bigotry, her temper unruffled by any strong passions,
all

all her actions were to be guided by prudence, and virtue was to be the constant inhabitant of her bosom. Not that humble virtue, which, conscious of human frailty, looks continually to divine support, but virtue as exhibited in the beautiful visions of Plato and other heathen moralists, stern, undeviating, self-confident, unrelenting, virtue; a quality which, if it *ever* existed, is at least not congenial to the nature of frail, dependent man.

As to her behaviour to himself, he proposed that she should comfort him for all his past disappointments and sorrows. She was to be his friend, his confidant, his constant companion. Her attachment to him was to be quite distinct from the ties of nature, because she was to be instructed that those ties are merely the bond of prejudice. It was not to be the result of duty; because duty implies obligation, and must there-

fore be unfuitable to the nature of an independent, reflecting being.—I shall get bewildered in this maze of metaphysics if I proceed further; and as I really do not understand this scheme of filtering our feelings, I will only state the effects of it. After Lady Caroline's regard for her father had been purified from the *scum* of natural affection, and the *dross* of filial duty, common observers could not perceive that *any* was left.

When a recipe fails, we should not always censure the physician. The compounder of drugs may be careless, or however sovereign the remedy, it may not suit all constitutions. I have been so seriously assured that the wisest method of ameliorating the human character is, to leave off the old way of dressing and pruning it, and to let it shoot out with unrestrained vigour, in the hope that it will produce a few nondescript wildings

wildings, that I have cause to lament my own pertinacity, in preferring the well-flavoured fruit that early subjugation used to produce, to this species of redundant vegetation, which is so very prolific in leaves, and so lamentably barren in *useful* produce. It is, doubtless, owing to my ill-conducted education, which has given me a wrong association of ideas ; but I never can read a profound system of instruction, formed on the basis of inherent independence and natural perfectibility, without having Laputa's fables before my eyes, and I suppose myself investigating the apparatus of the worthy who was trying to extract sunbeams from cucumbers.

But to return to my narrative. From the above hints, the judicious reader will observe, that it is possible that the conversation I lately repeated might induce Lady Caroline to dread her father's plans, and to dislike the friends whom

she was to welcome with such cordial satisfaction. As no fresh addition was made to the dinner-party except the FitzJohns, she began to ask herself if they could be the expected guests; and, connecting the latter part of his lordship's discourse with the secret that he seemed anxious to divulge, she asked herself if Melisandriana could be the person pitched upon for her future companion. One whimsical idea followed another. In what capacity could Miss FitzJohn be established in the family? "As Lady Glanville?" "Impossible!" "No, not impossible." "Improbable and ridiculous then." "True, but ridiculous things often happen, and improbabilities sometimes come to pass." "Very provoking." "Granted; but widowers in the decline of life *have* provoked their grown-up daughters by a similar conduct. The girl was handsome, his lordship a valetudinarian. It argued

great weakness and relaxation of mind to suffer the concerns of the *material* body to unfit the imagination for its sublime operations ; and a man who could abandon Bolingbroke and Rousseau for Buchan, and give up experiments on carbonic gas to compound medicines, must be so deplorably deficient in mental energy, as to find amusement in the conversation of a girl who had not an idea beyond a gold bandeau, or a new overture."

Lady Caroline at last concluded that it really was likely that Lord Glanville would marry Miss FitzJohn, and relieve his hypochondriasis with folding thread-papers, and painting boxes to hold silkworms. It would certainly be mortifying, on *some* accounts, to have a Lady Paramount fixed in Glanville castle ; but, as she should then be left at leisure to pursue her darling studies and amusements, and relieved from the tedium of
eternal

eternal complaints, and the study of pulsation, she fancied the thing might do, especially as she should have one certain resource against ennui—a fool always at hand to laugh at and to torment. At all events, if home became intolerable, the independent fortune left her by her grandfather, Lord Lewson, would afford her an establishment of her own, even if she refused to comply with the urgent solicitude of any of her *numerous* adorers, a circumstance which her lofty notions of the rights of her sex rendered *not* improbable.

Such were the reflections that occupied Lady Caroline's mind as she sat at table; and the result was, a determination to divert the chagrin that her father's conversation had inspired, by encouraging the folly of the FitzJohns: a scheme certain of success, as her ladyship's expectations and hopes were pretty

clearly ascertained by all discerning observers. Lady Caroline termed this only a little harmless badinage, resorted to out of self-defence, and she saw no reason why the jest should not be pursued. Is not folly lawful game? is not pleasure a warrantable wish? and if folly appears in the form of a father, or pleasure takes the shape of filial disrespect, the character is still the same; and you must liberate your mind from those false combinations which have made you suppose that you owe *moral* obligations for *physical* benefits. The authors of your existence are merely human beings, antecedent to you one generation, but as much machines in the hand of nature as the tulip when it forms and fosters the offset. If, indeed, your predecessors are wise and good, you owe them affection and reverence; but if you pay that tribute to the *parent*, and not to the abstract quality,

quality, you are an *idolatrous* slave to prejudice, and not a calm admirer of what “is perfect, fair, and good.”

Lady Caroline inherited her mother’s vivacity, and was tolerably successful at raillery. The attack began during the dessert, by her sending a slice of pine to her father, with a hope that he would eat it, as it had just been recommended by Miss FitzJohn, for possessing the true Hesperian flavour. A gentleman of the name of Raymond, encouraged by a nod from Lady Caroline, informed Melisandriana that he had long suspected her of being one of the fair guardians of those celebrated gardens; but he observed, surely she had neglected her charge in suffering the fruit to be *stolen* for the use of mortals. Lady Caroline, perceiving by Miss FitzJohn’s unmeaning laugh, that she had already arrived at the end of her mythological know-

ledge, reproved Raymond for undue severity, by confounding a present to a *very particular* friend with a general breach of trust. Raymond and Lady Caroline, like Prince Prettyman and his taylor, continued to give hit for hit, to the amusement of the company, who, beside the admiration which the wit of an earl's daughter must always excite, did not dislike a little raillery at the expence of ignorance and affectation.

Ignorance has, however, a peculiar method of defending itself; for while other people call out "A palpable hit," it generally joins in the shout, supposing its adversary to be wounded. Lady FitzJohn was too well pleased at observing every eye turned upon her daughter, to consider any thing but whether she sat in an elegant position; and, being convinced that she really looked picturesque, she complacently observed

served to the gentleman next her, that a smile and a blush always made young people look *interesting*.

A look from Lord Glanville at last compelled Lady Caroline to relinquish the prey which she had now hunted into the restless fidget of awkward affectation. His lordship always thought *quizzing* an unpolite practice, noways consistent with the popular manners of elegant breeding. On such an important occasion he deemed it expedient to trespass upon his daughter's natural independence; and I must observe, that when his *nod* was given, it was quite as authoritative as that of Jupiter. We well know that Juno and Minerva, after it had awed them into silence, began to scold as soon as they got out of the council-chamber; and poor Lady Caroline was only obliged to repress her frolicsome humour till she was safe in the drawing-room.

Professed wits are so far serviceable to society, that they *compel* the over-bearing and the importunate to respect its institutions. But there is a degree of folly, as I have just observed, that is invulnerable. Very little encouragement was sufficient to make the FitzJohns exhibit in full style. Lady Caroline had only to name music, and Melisandriana sung and played; or to talk of grace, to make her shew all her ballet steps, stalk round the room in Italian majesty, or fix herself in some Grecian attitude. If a popular poem was mentioned, Miss Fitz-John favoured you with a trite quotation. No fashionable amusement or elegant ornament could be mentioned, but this versatile genius gave you its history, or described it by something that she wore in her dress; concluding her observations with the question of, “Is not it immensely prepossessing.”

“Wonder-

“Wonderful and magnanimous,” repeated Lady Caroline, who, weary of playing off a puppet that was too uniform to shew her own address, lolled listlessly on the sofa, while Melisandriania performed her *tour* of graces. “I protest, Lady FitzJohn,” continued she, “if had such a daughter I should be wretched.”

The fond mother started, and uttered an exclamatory “Madam!” at this observation. “Aye, wretched,” observed the sarcastic eulogist; “for only think what a treasure is intrusted to your keeping! what spirit! what infinite beauty! what immeasurable attractions! I expect to hear of the revival of chivalry’s heroic deeds. The very villages will swarm with knights, and W—— fair will become a tournament. But, dear Melisandriania, I hope you do not pour forth your agreeables thus unmercifully in *all* companies. You should contrive

to look less lovely, or you must devote your reputation a sacrifice to the spleen of those forlorn damsels whom you deprive of adorers. But I believe that caution is too late."

"O lud, madam, you quite terrify me. What do the spiteful creatures say?"

"Don't be alarmed, my dear; merit must have its shade to pursue it you know. Now, to prove that I utterly despise all their rumours, and think you quite superior to *mercenary* conquests, do let us have Lucretia stabbing herself in your best style, just when Lord Glanville comes into the room. Nay, if you hesitate, I shall suspect that you are *particular* in your *views*."

There is a manner of asking a thing to be done, which deprives us of the power of doing it well. The lovely Melisandria had no objection to give the earl a little cast of her powers in the sublime;

blime; but by touching a neighbouring cord, owing to her confusion at Lady Caroline's suggestion, she produced the ridiculous. For though his lordship, on his entering the room, was desired to "Look," either from the shortness of his sight, or from his being in a wrong situation for beholding the whole contour, he unluckily supposed her to be pouring out the coffee, instead of acting an indignant heroine striking the mortal stroke, that was to clear her polluted honour and give liberty to Rome. While every one else, therefore, continued wrapt in silent admiration, his lordship, after politely thanking the young lady for undertaking a troublesome office, declared, though it was a beverage he was not in the habit of drinking, he would not decline taking one cup from her. Nothing but a compliment from Lord Glanville could have supported the FitzJohns against the general laugh.

The fair performer was, however, so chagrined, that she did not launch into the picturesque any more that evening.

When the company had all retired, the usual *tête-à-tête* took place at the castle. That is to say, Lord Glanville sunk into one of his silent reveries, and Lady Caroline, extremely well satisfied with the part she had performed, sat planning fresh mortifications for her destined step-dame. She was roused from a scheme that promised exuberant mirth, by his lordship's telling her that her vivacity sometimes transgressed the bounds of propriety. He admitted the purity of her intentions, and confirmed her full right to act as she pleased; and he protested that he never would in the smallest degree suspect the one, or infringe the other: but he *desired* (and at that word he bent his brow with somewhat of Jupiter's majesty) that she would remember he had some *weighty* reasons for
for

for cultivating the friendship of the FitzJohns, and for disliking Raymond.

Lady Caroline had been taught that no intelligent being owed a tacit assent to the assertions of another, unless those assertions corresponded with their own feelings and experience. In this particular instance the above criteria were in decided opposition to his lordship's opinion. As the father's sentiments were involved in a long concatenation of circumstances, I choose to disclose the daughter's. She thought the FitzJohns vulgar, stupid, and disagreeable, and Mr. Raymond excessively amusing. Possibly she might never have thought of the latter in any other point of view than as a person who helped to divert the tedium of rural retirement; but, as her father had pointed him out as an object of his dislike, it was but an act of moral justice to analyze his character.

Mr.

Mr. Raymond then, she allowed, was only the younger son of a younger brother. The harder certainly was his lot. Nobody would have chosen such an origin ; but, as we are all creatures of necessity, it was unjust to reproach him with what he would certainly have wished to avoid. He had beside no profession ; possibly that might arise from the superior enlargement of his ideas, and his uncommon rectitude. He might have too much liberality and genius to submit to the drudgery of application. Could a capacious intellect devote itself to the study of a part, when it possessed capabilities to *grasp* the whole ? Could a soul conscious of inherent independence submit to be the mere machine of tyrannous coercion, by joining those naval or military slaves who, renouncing all moral ideas of rectitude and self-government, trade in plunder and devastation, fattening on the miseries of mankind ?

Could

Could he, consistent with the feelings of humanity, study the medicinal art, which must compel him to wish disease and misfortune to all his acquaintance? The science of law must be still more abhorrent to a mind that was probably enamoured of the august vision of natural right, antecedent to all arbitrary combinations of the mighty to oppress the weak. As to theological pursuits, Lady Caroline's sentiments on that head must be too easily divined to make it necessary for me to observe, that she considered an assent to such absurd, self-contradictory dogmas as those which the establishment supported, as sufficient of itself to degrade a character that had no other fault; and her contempt for the clergy was considerably increased by her being persuaded that not one of them visited Glanville castle, but from the distant hope of getting a good living, or from the present enjoyment of eating a good dinner.

'Tis true, the earl's hospitable board was frequented by *coloured* coats rather more than *black* ones, and the charge of selfishness *might* be equally assigned to both ; but as the latter have long possessed a prescriptive right to the titles of epicures and graspsalls, Lady Caroline was contented with acceding to a generally-received opinion, and believed the neighbouring esquires were only influenced by a commendable love of good neighbourhood when they regularly attended at the castle on all public days.

But to return to Mr. Raymond : though he was nominally enrolled in the corps of idle men of fashion, Lady Caroline doubted whether he ought not to be considered in the light of a gentleman of a very enlightened and *philosophical* turn of mind. She paused a moment, and then discovered in his easy address and graceful person abundant reasons to *confirm* that opinion, and she resolved to
look

look upon him as a being of a higher order.

With respect to Mr. Raymond's *moral* character and estimation in the world, she knew no more of him than that he was received on an easy footing in the best families. This sometimes produces servility; but, in justice to his independent character, she could not but acknowledge that he never had acted like a parasite to Lord Glanville; and she was persuaded that his lordship's dislike arose from the manly freedom with which he had always supported *her* opinions, in preference to her *father's*.

Lady Caroline amused herself with these conjectures, and with plaiting her handkerchief into the form of Lady FitzJohn's turban, which she fixed over one ear of her Italian greyhound, till it was time to retire. She had, however, given *one* instance of that acquiescence with her father's wishes which recipro-

city

city of sentiment could alone inspire. When the servant brought in sandwiches, she ordered her carriage at an early hour, saying that she was determined to spend a long morning with the *dear* FitzJohns.

The curricule reached Sir Peter's soon after the family had assembled to breakfast, and in the midst of her ladyship's harangue on the adventures of the preceding day. She had travelled through the *vast* round of Lady Caroline's pride, caprice, envy, and insolence, and had just worked herself up to that degree of anger which indignantly drops proper names, and adopts the indefinite and *safe* term of people. "If people," continued her ladyship, "are not so handsome as other people, they need not give way to malice; for other people may easily guess people's motives to prevent somebody from using their own eyes." As her ladyship's style was more involved

involved in obscurity in proportion as her resentment increased, it was a relief to her auditors to hear a carriage stop at the door. "What vulgar creature can be come so early?" exclaimed Lady FitzJohn; "somebody who has mistaken the house for the ware-house I suppose." "As I live," cried Melisandriana, "the Glanville livery." "Oh!" continued the mother, "doubtless his lordship come to make apologies for his daughter's rude behaviour. Run love put on your straw-coloured pelice, and blue obi. Here, John, take away these trumpery cups, and bring the Salopian tea service. No! there won't be time, we will go without breakfast. This comes of Sir Peter's saving schemes. I would never use these vulgar things only he wears one *to death* about economy."

Lady Caroline's nimble foot almost anticipated every alteration. She met
the

the tea-tray at the door, or rather at the bottom of the stairs; for John thought that rolling it down was the quickest way of getting rid of the odious trumpery for ever. Lady Caroline tripped lightly amidst the fragments, and was in the breakfast-room before Lady Fitz-John had pulled her wig straight, and given the Circassian fold to her wrapper.

Concluding that my readers are not such novices as to be surprised at a little uncertainty in either first or second-rate fine ladies, I shall only state, that the ladies met almost breathless with *rapture*. “Dear creature!” “Obliging condescension!” “Impatience to see you.” “Thanks for hospitality.” “Kind attentions,” and “Do come often,” were poured forth with most engaging volubility. Supposing some of my *young* friends may like a little further specimen of the “polite conversation of sensible women” I will proceed :

“But

“ But where is the enchanting Melisandriana, I hope she has not taken cold. She must be in voice when she comes to the castle. Lord Glanville is quite wretched till he has heard her sing.”

“ Dearest Lady Caroline, Melisandriana is —— ”

“ Right, so you told me. Oh my treacherous memory ! Well really this is a tolerably pleasant room. I did not think there was one so good in W——. I vow it is almost comfortable. But the view is horrid. Dear FitzJohn, I wonder a woman of your taste can endure those deplorable buildings. Down with them every stone. Now if the river was turned, and the south slope planted with a few thousand firs, it would be but a trifling expence. —— ”

“ Oh it would be charming ! But that is the town hall, and the market-house.”

“ True,

“ True, I make sad mistakes whenever I talk to the monied interest. But now I must find fault with *you*. What can be the design of that gigantic book-case? It is neither Grecian nor Gothic.”

“ I thought people always had books in their dressing-rooms, to shew that they read in a morning.”

“ Aye, but you should put them into something slight. A paste-board shelf tied by twopenny ribbon, to hold a few hot pressed poems for a lounge. Positively you must turn out that Gog and Magog machine, it makes my head ache to look at it. Pin up some aquatinta views instead of it. I'll choose you an assortment, and I would advise you to change them twice a week, 'tis so fatiguing to look at the same thing long.”

“ You are infinitely obliging.”

“ Oh giving hints is my forte. What, is this the cover of a sofa? Good heavens 'tis a work bag! Why dear Fitz-
John,

John, surely you don't dearn the counterpanes yourself. Three inches long and four wide is the most *extreme* size, and you never ought to have any thing in it but a knotting shuttle, toothpick, and smelling bottle."

"I must own, Melisandriania painted it *last* year."

"Give it the housemaid for a cradle quilt. But where is my little Hebe's Port-Feuille? Views in Italy. Aye *any thing* does for Italy."

"Connoisseurs say Melisandriania is very exact."

"A terrible fault indeed. Nothing gives an air of taste, but dashing boldly. Look, if she deepens this out-line, puts a grey wash in the back ground, furls those clouds, groupes peasants, or inserts castles, or Etruscan ruins, or any thing that will make it unlike the original on that hill, then give a warm autumnal tint to the landscape. —"

"It

“ It is designed for spring.

“ I know it ; but always change the season. Spring objects look prettiest where one does not expect to find them. But I am in an amazing hurry, so let me turn over her music. ‘ The Red-cross Knight ’ and ‘ Sweet Bird that shuns the noise of folly.’ What a cathedral selection. For heaven’s sake, let her get ‘ Goosy Gander ’ and ‘ Tom Horner ’ immediately.”

“ Lady Caroline ! ”——

“ No creature minds the words, and the tunes are so simply sweet. The little syren’s plaintive tone would suit them admirably. How I delight to assist her studies, and to communicate that air of fashion that would make her irresistible. How I regret not seeing her. Give her a thousand loves, and tell her—I vow I have forgot my lord’s message to her. But she must remember the

music ; I recommend simple melody, Goosey, Goosey Gander."

Exit Lady Caroline, singing.

Propitiated by the last speech, Lady FitzJohn in vain shouted an urgent intreaty that she would stay till her daughter came. Lady Caroline raised the key till it reached the pitch of Lady FitzJohn's voice, and, running down stairs, seated herself in the curricule. Then looking up with a gracious bow and inviting smile, kissed her hand to Miss FitzJohn, who finished her dress time enough to be at the dressing-room window just as her ladyship drove off.

"Lady Caroline is immensely odd," observed Miss FitzJohn.

"Yes," returned her mother, "but I do think she has a good heart."

"I wonder whether she will be *ton* next winter," said Melisandriana.

"I sometimes think her a little deranged," resumed her ladyship.

“ Oh that won't signify. There was Lady Bell Brazen, and the Hon. Mrs. Dareall, and Miss Frisk, did as strange things last year. Low people said they were crazy, but the world allowed them to be *ton*, and so every body imitated them.”

“ To do Lady Caroline justice,” said Lady FitzJohn, “ she does seem to wish to cultivate an acquaintance with us. Did you hear her sing ?”

“ Oh yes, and mademoiselle said it was horrid. But mademoiselle knows nothing about what has been right these seven years. I think Lady Caroline will go off very well; for the town wants new faces, and her figure is quite attic.”

As my readers have probably had enough of mere fashion, I will introduce a little common sense in the next chapter by way of variety.

CHAP. X.

The Repose of the Castle disturbed by Appearances as tremendous and portentous as the nodding Plumes at Otranto.

FOR one fortnight Lady Caroline persevered in her plan of obliging her father, and cultivating the friendship of the FitzJohns; but, though the aptitude of her pupils enabled her every day to engraft some *new* extravagance on the *original* stock of absurdity, she grew weary of heaping incense on the shrine of vanity, and “holding up a mirror to folly” in which it refused to “see its own likeness.” As a *dejeuné*, her neighbours were invaluable;

able ; but the mind required more solid food than *entremets* ; yet the environs of Glanville castle afforded little to gratify the palled appetite of a philosophical epicure.

Perhaps the conversation of Mr. Raymond was one exception to general satiety. That gentleman was constant in his visits ; and, though nothing could be cooler than the earl's general reception, he was one of those happy characters that can parry scorn, and, wrapped in the consciousness of its own worth, sit indulging the reveries of self gratulation, while every body else is astonished at its impudence. Beside, though angry Jupiter rose in opposition, a softer planet shed benign influence ; and a man must be more than a stoic whose apathy could resist the brilliant attractions of Lady Caroline Glanville.

It cannot be expected, that the morbid melancholy which preyed upon the
earl

earl abated at his perceiving that the heiress of his fortunes devoted her attention to a man whom he considered as little better than a knight of industry. Nor did his sagacity afford a clue by which to direct his own conduct. As native pride confirmed his aristocratic predilection for titles, rank, and connexion, it no less restrained him from acknowledging that the principles by which he had governed his conduct were erroneous, as he must do if he proclaimed to the world that "the hope was drunk wherein he dressed himself." Beside, if, contrary to all rule, paternal authority should interpose, and forbid Raymond's visit, was there a prospect that such an interference would have a salutary influence over the lofty spirit of his daughter? He had plainly intimated his dislike; and the consequence was, that Raymond had risen considerably in Lady Caroline's estimation. He had

encouraged her to despise prescription, to think and act for herself, and ever to bear in memory that *well-sounding* maxim, "The conscious mind is its own awful world;" and he had cause to apprehend that the reason he had so carefully cultivated, would burst upon him in something like the following splendid exordium.

"You have taught me, that nature and feeling are ever right in their decisions; and you wish me to obey the vitiated laws of custom and general opinion. You have convinced me, that I possess inherent independence; and now you would inforce my submission to parental authority, an abuse which you have often told me was derived from misconception, fostered by priestcraft, and submitted to by childish imbecillity. You taught me, that my sex should pursue perfection by strengthening our passions at the expence of our vanity, and

and now you require me to sacrifice the most exalted of the passions, to what I esteem the corrupt habits of society. Can your sentiments of Raymond, or even the opinion that the world forms of him, become a rule to measure my perceptions? The many may suppose him a swindler, a dangler, a fortune-hunter, a parasite, or a contemptible being who subsists on the munificence of others. We are not formed to see objects through the same medium; and in the very qualities which you term vices I discover the germ of whatever is great and good. You have taught me to see and to judge for myself; you have told me that by adopting general opinions I should become the slave of prejudice, and that experience never made any thing but automaton. Adhere to your own precepts. As a human being I owe you universal philanthropy; nay I will go further, I will be tender of your

prejudices ; but it is upon the condition that you respect mine. If not, all ties between us are dissolved, and hostilities must commence. My attention to the FitzJohns is a sacrifice to your humours ; comply with mine by shewing civility to one whom I deem a kindred soul, or I must instantly assert those inherent rights which you have convinced me I possess."

As it is possible that the generality of fathers would not approve of such a declamation from any of their children, I must advise them to reflect before they adopt the new system of education. Its tenets are so well adapted to suit the perverse views of fallen humanity, that the *humblest* talent may hope to confront paternal *pertinacity*, with the weapons furnished by paternal *folly*. Surely, therefore, it is adviseable, that we should be certain that the reason we deify will prove to be right reason, before we accustom

custom our children to sacrifice every other motive of action on the altar of infallibility.

One evening Lady Caroline detained Raymond after the rest of the dinner company had gone home ; *ostensibly* from the motive of finishing a long contested game at chess, but *secretly* with the liberal design of counteracting her father's prejudices. The earl, to whom the moves of the combatants were exceedingly interesting, threw himself in a chair opposite, with his eyes fixed on his daughter's face, which was animated with peculiar vivacity. His reverie was interrupted by a servant's informing him of the arrival of two strangers, who announced themselves to be the *friends* that Lord Glanville had long expected. The pallid hue of his lordship's countenance became instantly changed to the deepest scarlet, which as quickly faded away. His whole frame trembled, and his scarce

articulate voice could hardly order that the company should be shewn into another room. He now again looked at Lady Caroline with somewhat of reproach mingled with affection. The feelings of the moment overcame habitual dissimulation, and he found himself compelled to acknowledge the weakness of humanity by sinking back in his chair.

Lady Caroline and her companion hastened to support him. He desired the former to ring the bell, and on a servant's appearing he bade him order Mr. Raymond's horses. Raymond, with an air of sullen contempt, stalked out of the room, while Lady Caroline, with an encouraging smile, desired him to come again soon, and finish the game. Lord Glanville dropped her hand at that moment, and uttered such a sigh as even roused the compassion of the fair stoic, who expressed her apprehensions that he *really* was unwell.

“Do

“Do you express your *hopes* or your *fears*?” inquired the earl sternly.

“Bless me, my lord!” replied the young lady, “you quite alarm me by that inquiry. I thought you used to pique yourself on the harmony, attachment, and confidence which subsists between us. Your lordship knows that you are *considered* as the most liberal of fathers, and that all the world *envies* me. If you give way to these melancholy moods, you will ruin your temper, as well as your health; and, instead of being considered as a *most agreeable* man, you will be avoided like Dr. Chalkstone, the old gouty prebendary.”

“True,” replied the earl, with a still deeper sigh, recollecting at that very instant one of his own maxims, namely, “reproof is the soul of friendship,” though possibly he could have wished that his daughter had not adopted it,

just at the instant when his soul was wrung by deep and incurable anguish. He then began to accuse the *infernal* damps which had so unhinged him, and made him so nervous and languid, that he could not see his friends that evening. "But you will do the honours, Caroline," continued he; "they are people of great worth and respectability; and before you retire to your chamber step to my bed-side and inform me how you like Mr. Brudenell—and *his—his* grand-daughter, and what they talk about."

Wondering at this unusual request, Lady Caroline was passing to the door, when the earl again detained her.

"You was perfectly right to ask Raymond to come again. I know we see him in the same light; but I was too rude; it is, as I have heard *you* observe, impolitic to be rude to any one."

"O,

“ O, my dear lord, you are the very mirror of politeness and condescension. But may not I now wish you good night? I shall disturb you if I come in after you have taken your draught.”

“ I shall not sleep to-night,” said the earl pressing his hand to his head, with a look that seemed to say, “ I have murdered sleep.”

“ I really am unwilling to leave you,” continued this *affectionate* daughter, as she turned round to see if her father was likely to faint. “ Can’t I be of the least service to you,” was her kind inquiry as she held the door in her hand.

“ I shall be obliged to you to send Jervais to me,” said the *polite* father. “ I must go to bed; be attentive to our guests.”

“ Certainly; and I beg, that for my sake you will keep yourself quite quiet, and not *think* of them.”

“ I can-

“ I cannot help *thinking*,” replied Lord Glanville.

I am rather ashamed to record all these breaches of rules and systems in a professed assertor of the absolute volition of reason, the mechanism of habits, and the ideal distinctions of good and evil. I might, indeed, plead that Lord Glanville’s health was really impaired ; but, as mind ought always to be omnipotent over matter, I must allow, that neither a damp evening, nor an easterly wind, justify him for thus surrendering the authority of sovereign reason to physical causes. I feel myself compelled to disappoint those hopes which my first description of this nobleman may have excited, and observe, that philosophy has no right to accuse christianity of never producing a disciple who entirely lives up to its *holy* injunctions, till she herself can shew us a votary who executes her far *inferior* model of perfect-fair and good ;

of fulfilling her conception of those qualities in his *private* retirements, as well as when he *acts* a part upon the theatre of *public* observation.

Lady Caroline was so affected by her father's situation, that she thought proper to see Jervais herself. She charged the venerable old domestic, who had lived with the earl from his youth, to be very attentive to his master, and if he saw any symptoms of danger to inform her, that she might immediately send for medical assistance. She now proceeded to perform her hospitable duties, a little wondering who these strangers could be whom her father was so disposed to honour. She had just set them down for odd beings, counterparts of the Fitz-Johns, when, on entering their apartment, she was received by a clergyman of a most venerable, dignified aspect, and a young lady whose countenance
bespoke

bespoke an amiable and ingenuous mind.

“ Lady Caroline Glanville, I presume,” said Mr. Brudenell bowing with the air of a man who had already seen something quite as wonderful. “ Sophia, my love, I am sure you will be happy to merit the good opinion of Lady Caroline.”

The young lady advanced with modest grace, and presented her hand, but withdrew it when she perceived Lady Caroline seemed scarcely disposed to second this familiarity. She also attempted to speak, but her voice faltered too much to say any thing articulately.

Lady Caroline’s penetration had instantaneously discovered in this young stranger the companion of whom her father had formerly talked ; and, though she was not predisposed to feel partial to his proteges, she almost believed she
should

should like something so gentle and unassuming. "At least," said she to herself, "this girl seems free from affectation, and I should think her timidity indicates that she is of a good *teachable* disposition. She will do to play off against that detestable Melisandriana. But it will not be amiss to shew the poor thing a few of the advantages that result from an education conducted upon an enlarged liberal plan."

In compliance with this resolution, Lady Caroline now rushed on the fair stranger with open arms, and embraced her with an air of extacy. "I have been studying your countenance," said she, "and the investigation convinces me that you have an indubitable claim to the esteem of every beholder: Miss Brudenell will, I trust, allow me to rank myself amongst her *warmest* friends."

"The most discerning," observed Mr. Brudenell with a smile, "are liable to mistakes

mistakes on superficial information. You must at present call her Sophy Herbert ; and you must permit her to claim your friendship as a reward for *desert*, not as a *gratuitous* present."

Lady Caroline turned her eyes upon Mr. Brudenell, and felt the reflection of " this is an odd old quiz" checked by the mild benignity of his countenance. She was extremely inclined to *despise* a man who had the audacity to give her a gentle reproof ; yet she could proceed no further than to wonder where he had spent his time, that he should thus attempt to check the lively effusion of spontaneous affection. His elegant manners did not allow her to suppose that he had lived in entire seclusion ; and yet surely *his* world must have been very different from that with which *she* had been acquainted.

She now began to apologize for her father's absence, and was proceeding to relate

relate all the circumstances that attended his being taken suddenly ill at the moment their arrival was announced, when she was interrupted by Mr. Brudenell's desiring Miss Herbert to walk to the window, observing that her journey had overcome her. Lady Caroline stepped forward to offer the young lady her salts, and perceived that she was in tears. All further offices of civility were prevented by Sophia's desiring, in a manner too earnest to be merely common-place, that Lady Caroline would immediately return to her father.

"It must be misery," said she, "for you to stay with us, and we are too weary to be good company this evening. Permit us to retire to our apartments. I am sure his lordship must wish for *your* attendance." Mr. Brudenell eagerly joined in this petition; he even seemed to indicate that duty *compelled* her to comply. "These are very extraordinary
nary

nary people, indeed" thought Lady Caroline.

At this instant Jervais appeared, with a request to speak to his lady. The strangers only indistinctly heard what passed; but they caught the words "Somewhat better, and wishes to see your ladyship for a few moments."

"Nay then all ceremony ends this instant," said Miss Herbert advancing to the door. "Indeed you *must* go. I feel myself quite at home, and if you perversely refuse me we will go to bed supperless from revenge." A sort of playful contest continued for a few minutes between the ladies; Caroline at length yielded, and called Jervais to follow her. Her summons was again repeated, while the old man stood rooted at the door, with his eyes rivetted on Miss Herbert's countenance.

Now, lest my readers should suppose that, by way of novelty, I am going to describe

describe an amour between an aged valet and a young beauty, I here declare that Mr. Jervais's attention to Miss Herbert proceeded from a sentiment very *distinct* from love.

We will now attend Lady Caroline to her father's chamber. She found him in his night-gown and slippers, and perceived that he had thrown himself upon the bed, from which his restless anxiety again compelled him to rise. She inquired after his health; "Better," replied he with energy. "It is very kind in you Caroline to leave your friends to come to me. I want to know what *you* think of them?" "It is impossible for me to judge on such a slight view," returned Lady Caroline.

"But their persons and manners?"

"Extremely prepossessing."

"Have you seen any body whom you think like Miss Herbert?"

"No, my lord."

"I have

“ I have heard that she has a likeness to our family. Do you perceive it ?”

“ Not in the least my lord. Is she related ?”

“ Distantly,” rejoined his lordship starting from his chair, and walking across the room. “ But you think her pleasant ?”

“ From the very little I have seen, I should say uncommonly so.”

“ I mean—it is my intention—I had some thoughts—that is, if it is perfectly agreeable to you, that she should *reside* with us in future. I fancied you wanted a companion.”

“ You are infinitely kind, my lord.”

“ But if you should have the least objection ——”

Lady Caroline saw many advantages in the services of an humble cousin, who promised to be lively, obsequious, good-humoured, and was not handsomer than herself. She would have embraced

braced the proposal with joy, had not her curiosity to know her father's motives for making it suggested some unpleasant forebodings: but these were overborne by the feelings of the moment; and she answered that she was sure she should feel happy in Miss Herbert's company. Lord Glanville pressed her hand with a more tranquil air, and dismissed her with an observation that he *now* fancied he could sleep.

Lord Glanville's restless habits, however, returned after his daughter had left him. He applied to his books; but Hume was inharmonious and Voltaire dull. He now felt obliged to condescend to converse with his servant, in order to avoid the *insupportable* company of his own thoughts. The silver hairs of Jervais, indeed, presented a claim for confidence, and his respectful manners proved that he would not abuse the familiarity of his superiors.

“ Well

“ Well Jervais,” said his lordship with an air of forced gaiety, “ I suppose the neighbourhood will soon begin to talk of the *graces* of Glanville castle. Sir Peter’s daughter is a sprightly brunette, Caroline is certainly tolerable, and our new inmate, the young lady who is just arrived, is I am told a beauty. Have you seen her Jervais?”

“ Yes, my lord.”

“ And what do you think of her? I suppose, like most *old* fellows, you will say she is nothing to the Kitty Fells and Nancy Dawsons of your youth.”

“ I should be sorry, my lord, to disparage the young lady. I do think her handsome, very handsome, but not so beautiful as a person whom I vastly admired seven and forty years ago.”

“ Aye! pray who was that?”

“ I beg your lordship’s pardon, we will name no names if your lordship pleases; though the young lady is so like

her, that at first I thought it was her risen out of her grave."

"I insist upon knowing whom you mean," said the earl rising.

"Then your lordship must not be displeased with me. The pretty creature we used to see at St. Mary's church when your lordship was first entered at Oxford. They called her Sophy Aubrey."

"Is she like Sophy Aubrey?" resumed the earl, dropping into a chair from extreme agitation.

"Her face," said Jervais, "the turn of her countenance, her voice—I fear your lordship is faint again —"

"No; seized with a spasm in my stomach. Give me some Noycan; these cursed damps unstring my nerves. Remember, Jervais, when the wind is in the south-west, I will drink three glasses of Madeira at dinner. I am better; leave me."

Jervais had reached the door, when his master called him back, to order him not to mention this circumstance to the family. Jervais, supposing his lordship alluded to the spasm in his stomach, replied, that Lady Caroline had given positive orders, that Dr. Merridan should be sent for if he had any return.

“What, to poison me?” exclaimed the earl in a rage. “She knows that I detest Merridan. I detected his quackery, and now he hates me, and I make no doubt would kill me out of revenge.”

“My lord, ’tis her ladyship’s anxiety ——”

“Aye! true, her sympathy, her affection. Right, Jervais. Caroline would be wretched if she lost me. Go and tell her I am better—quite well—but hark not one word——”

“Must I not own that your lordship has had another attack?”

“Fool—— I mean that Miss Herbert is like Sophy Aubrey. It would excite unfavourable ideas, strange suspicions.”

“I do not understand your lordship.”

“How should you?” returned the earl, forcing a hollow smile, as he recollected that Jervais had never been the *chosen* confidant of his amours, and had too little natural impertinence to *pry* into his secrets. “You must consider,” continued he, “that it is no compliment to compare a young lady of fashion to a sempstress. That Oxford girl was a sempstress I think.”

“A milliner, my lord.”

“You are right: I *forget* these things: The opiate affects my memory. But, Jervais, shut the door, and come near me. I want to talk to you. How came you so well acquainted with Sophy Aubrey?”

“Your lordship sent me——”

“How?”

“Twice to the shop, for parcels which you had purchased, and the young lady talked to me in such a pretty affable manner——”

“Can you remember what it was about?”

“Oh, my lord, I never shall forget. About your *goodness* to her old mother and her brother, the poor captain that was afterwards so rash, and *ungrateful*. The tears ran down her cheeks, and she clasped her lily hands while she begged heaven to bless you. She said you was the *best* of men. I think I see her now.”

“So do I,” said Lord Glanville, wildly fixing his eyes on vacancy, and grasping the hand of Jervais with convulsive terror.

“What can I do for your lordship?” said the faithful valet, who knew enough of his lord’s case, to have no dependence on the skill of Doctor Merridan.

“Give

“ Give me a hundred drops of laudanum,” said his lordship in the mournful accents of despair ; “ and if that do not relieve me *nothing* will.”

We will leave the earl to enjoy the feverish repose of forced forgetfulness, and attend the retirement of Lady Caroline. The events of the evening considerably affected *her* ; and a conversation which she had just had with the Brudenells rendered her equally unfit for sleep, or to be amused by the conversation of her favourite Abigail. In vain did Mrs. Chenille expatiate on the *elegance* of cambric muslin striped with lace, on the *jintility* of bell sleeves, on the *becomingness* of silver *tyras*, and the *enchanting* effect of bare elbows and naked shoulders. Lady Caroline continued playing inattentively with her smelling-bottle.

A new subject was then started ; and Mrs. Chenille declared it to be the opi-

nion of the *majors* in the steward's room, that the young lady who was just arrived did not know how to *dress* (or I should rather say *undress*) to advantage. "Mr. Jervais and Thomas," continued Mrs. Chenille, "did say she was very handsome, and Mr. Doyley gave her for his toast; but Mrs Brown said your ladyship was millions of times more beautiful; so to be sure I was *edgey* to see her, and would carry in bed-candles myself. But such a figure, so wrapped and huddled, with no more drapery than a Dutch doll, and such a blowse of hair in her neck; and so, to be sure, when I went to offer her my services, she made me a curtesy, and said she was used to wait on herself. Aye, thought I, so you do I dare say; but if you had any body with you that was a *genus*, you would be a better figure than you are."

This rhetorical fally was not honoured by one poor simile. Lady Caroline was
too,

too much struck by some observations of Mr. Brudenell's to be pleased with abuse or frivolity. The conversation of that gentleman tended to confirm the favourable opinion which his first appearance excited. He seemed sufficiently attentive to the claims of *others* to be respectful and polite, and sufficiently conscious of what was due to *himself* to be firm and dignified. He appeared to have the art of giving interest to grave discourse, by the happy choice of his expressions, and the casual introduction of apposite but striking anecdotes. He knew enough of the world to treat it with propriety ; he neither spoke of it with the asperity of a disappointed worshipper, nor with the adulatory commendations of a candidate for its smiles. He seemed satisfied with life's feast, willing to rise from the banquet, and wholly void of envy at those new guests who were to supply his place at the table. The only

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plea

plea that Lady Caroline could form against her being *excessively* fond of Mr. Brudenell's company proceeded from her fearing that she *never could laugh at him*.

And yet he had many appendages that had been the never-failing theme of her ladyship's ridicule when annexed to the black coats who frequented her father's table. In the first place, he wore an immense canonical wig, to which her ideas always attached stupidity and bigotry. Next, his coat was made in almost positive defiance of the prevailing mode; he had a rose in his large hat, which was also flapped in front, and he did not blush to display a pair of small gold shoe buckles. All this was certainly very singular, yet such a gracefulness did these modes acquire from the suavity of his manners, that she doubted whether they were not more characteristic of the Christian priesthood, than the
half

half pagan half democratic dress of clerical jessamies, bloods, or foxhunters.

To proceed with Mr. Brudenell's *odd* ways. He said grace at supper. This obsolete custom was, she knew, sometimes revived, when any dignified clergyman was present ; but she observed the time was generally spent by the ladies in deciding which gentleman should sit by them ; and the whole affair was always so confused, that she could not recollect ever hearing a word of it. Yet, so impressive was Mr. Brudenell's voice, and so devout his manner, that allowing the Supreme Being could be interested by the addresses of mortals, and that the fruits of the earth really did proceed from his bounty, and not from the ordinary operations of *nature*, there was an air of gratitude and *propriety* in the ceremony.

Still, though Lady Caroline allowed Mr. Brudenell to be a gentleman, she must affirm that he belonged to the old

school. The servants had hardly retired, when he revived another gothic custom, and, filling his glass, proposed as a sentiment the restoration of Lord Glanville's health and happiness. "You must be guilty of a little excess to-night, ladies," said he, "by pledging me in a wish so highly interesting to *us* all."

"Undoubtedly," returned Lady Caroline. "But, Mr. Brudenell, I conclude that you are one of my lord's very old friends; and, as I doubt not you have a great influence over him, you must allow me to request that you will exert it in one instance."

"I believe," returned Mr. Brudenell, "I may truly style myself his lordship's *friend*; but, as I have not the honour to be personally known to him, it is doubtful what influence I *may* possess."

"Not known to *him*! Pardon me, you speak with such frankness, that I feel myself induced to throw off all reserve.

Mine

Mine is naturally an open character, and I rejoice when I meet with one similar to my own. May I ask if *you* are *related* to our family?"

Mr. Brudenell answered,—“*I* have not that honour. I confess, my dear Lady Caroline, we are at present very *mysterious* people. I am convinced that his lordship will soon relieve your very pardonable curiosity respecting the reasons of our intrusion; and in the interim, if I can any way promote your wishes—— But you was going to *request* something of me. Had you not better turn it into a *command*?”

“There are gentlemen whom I may *command*,” said Lady Caroline smiling, “but I dare not talk in that style to you. What I wish is, that you would advise my lord to exert his energies to subdue a habit of dejection that grows upon him every year. It injures his health, and renders him quite miserable
in

in the midst of all his enjoyments. Beside, he is so engrossed by this host of blue devils, one shrieking about an east wind, and another howling over a damp, that he is absolutely spoiled for a companion."

"You must prepare yourself for a long reply, madam," returned Mr. Brudenell, "and I will allow you to smile at my egotism and garrulity; but *we* old men have a common interest in excusing the infirmities of age. Consider one moment, before you censure your father for giving way to melancholy, how different must be the estimate that we form of life, when we view it from the *eminence* of youth, and when we contemplate it from the *vale* of years. At the former period, we generally possess health, strength, lively spirits, fair prospects, a conscience free from any keen remorse, and a mind unbroken by care or disappointment. Where will you point

point out the favoured being who has carried all these blessings with him to his journey's end? Happy are those who preserve only *one* of them, I mean a soul untroubled by remorse. But can you wonder that enfeebled strength and declining health should often want resolution to exert those energies of which you speak? The understanding cannot always be active under the pressure of bodily suffering; and if we recur to Memory for amusement, she has recorded much of what is painful, as well as what is pleasant. Our mental faculties too often participate in our corporeal decay; and very few people on the verge of seventy feel themselves equal to those active exercises that are even necessary to brace the nerves of youth. In this state, the best of us are glad to throw ourselves on the assistance of our fellow-creatures; and, as youth may profit by the experience of age, so age derives its most exhilarating

hilarating cordial from the kind attentions and lively fallies of youth. Your ladyship is looking at your watch; allow me one moment to make the *application*; for I must proceed in my *professional* routine. I have little chance of relieving Lord Glanville's dejection, especially as it has resisted the united powers of your very pleasing vivacity, and I doubt not very exemplary *filial* piety."

Lady Caroline blushed, played with her locket, longed to appear angry with Mr. Brudenell, and owned with a faltering tone, that his lordship's melancholy had so far *infected* her, that she felt it impossible to *exert* herself to entertain him.

"This is all very natural, madam," replied Mr. Brudenell. "We conform to the habits of those we converse with; but, as Providence designed this for one of the securities of social comfort, we must not complain. You will henceforth

forth have an assistant. Sophia will consider it as her duty and pleasure to join you in your painful but amiable office ; and I trust we shall restore the Earl of Glanville to his *early* self."

"Do you know, Miss Herbert," said Lady Caroline, who had sufficiently recovered herself to be a little arch, "that your grandfather is a rebel? A pretty figure I should have made had I been duped by his *false* humility, and laid any *commands* upon him. Had I, for instance, only *ordered* him to join me in a reel, I almost fear he would have been refractory."

"He had such a confidence in your propriety," replied Miss Herbert, "that he was certain you would not have wished to exhibit him in a *ridiculous* light. But what has he done that is so very rebellious?"

"Has not he presumed to give me an oblique lecture?" returned Lady Caroline ;

Caroline ; “ and must I not creep through the cold gallery before I go to bed, and stand listening at my lord’s chamber door to know if he is asleep ? ”

“ At least,” observed Sophia, “ my grandpapa does not excel *you* in the art of giving *oblique* lectures. My dear sir, time has flown so pleasantly, that we have forgotten the hour. But Lady Caroline has just hinted, that she *must* perform her accustomed attentions to Lord Glanville, who is doubtless *waiting* for her expected visit.”

Mr. Brudenell rose at this address, and, respectfully bowing to Lady Caroline, “ My dear pupil, or my dear lady mistress,” said he “ by whatever name you choose to call yourself, be assured that you see in me only one character, namely, a plain old man, who wishes to be your faithful friend. Present our respectful regards to Lord Glanville. Bid him consult his own feelings ; per-
haps

haps he had better see me before Sophia is introduced. Good night, my dear girl," continued he, turning to his granddaughter, who trembled at the preceding address; "be composed and commend yourself to the care of Heaven; all will end well."

It was upon this very singular conversation that Lady Caroline ruminated. "These people," said she to herself, "are neither fools nor bigots, and yet they appear to be really religious. They must surely be hypocrites, and yet they seem too cheerful and unconstrained to be acting a part. I long to talk to Miss Herbert about her principles; as for Mr Brudenell, I do not think that I dare attack him, even with Voltaire at my elbow."

Such were the reflections that crowded into Lady Caroline's mind, and almost excluded her curiosity to solve the enigma, why these extraordinary visitors appeared

appeared at Glanville castle in a style so dissimilar to that of common guests. Even her solicitude to beat Mr. Raymond at chess was abated ; and she perceived that she had thought less of him for some hours, than she had done for many weeks preceding.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

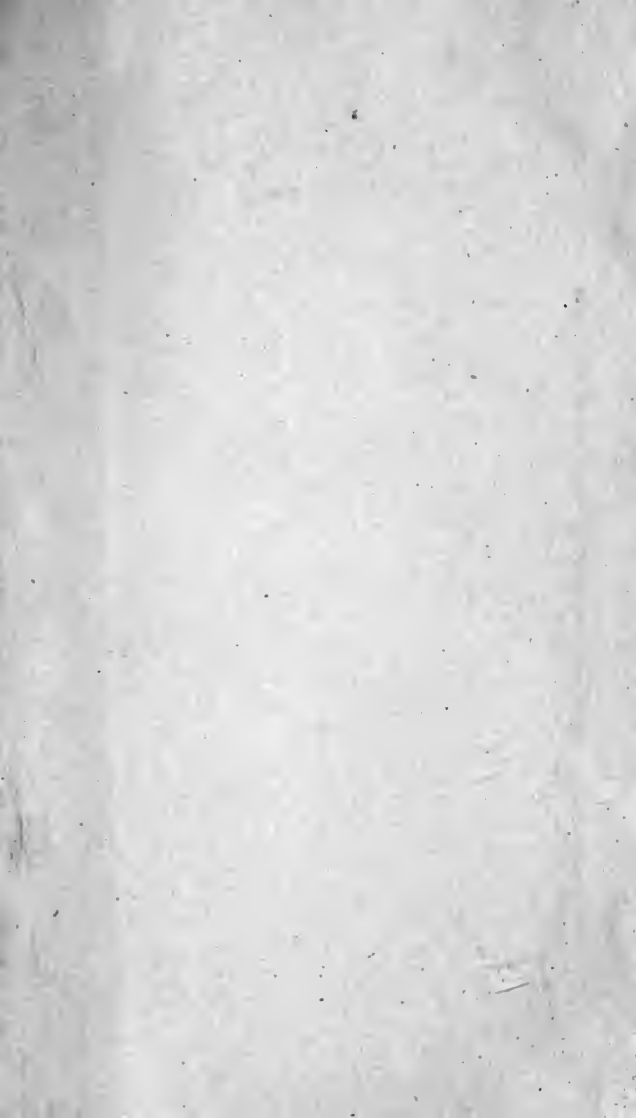












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